



THE
L I F E,
C H A R A C T E R,
RISE AND CONDUCT,
OF
Count BRUHL,
PRIME MINISTER to the KING of POLAND,
ELECTOR of SAXONY;
IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,
By an EMINENT HAND.



THE
LIFE OF
JOHN A. WILSON
BY
JOHN B. WILSON
WITH
A
NARRATIVE OF HIS
LIFE AND
DEEDS
BY
JOHN B. WILSON
AND
JOHN A. WILSON

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L I F E,
C H A R A C T E R,
R I S E A N D C O N D U C T,
O F
Count BRUHL,

PRIME MINISTER to the KING of POLAND;
ELECTOR of SAXONY;

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

By an EMINENT HAND:

Throwing a Light on the real Origin of the past and present
WAR in GERMANY,

And the INTRIGUES of Several Powers.

Carefully Translated from the GERMAN Original.

of J.C. Adelung
The SECOND EDITION.

*Si populo consulis, remove te a suspitione alicujus, tui commodi fac
fidem, te nihil, nisi populi utilitatem et fructum querere. Cic.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for M: COOPER, in PATER-NOSTER-ROW,
and C. G. SEYFFERT, in PALL-MALL.

MDCCLXI.

THE

L I F E

CHARACTER

AND CONDUCT

OF

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PRIME MINISTER OF THE KING OF POLAND,
Elector of Saxony;

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With a new Preface, and a more complete and accurate translation
of the original, and a new edition of the letters.

LONDON:

Printed by M. COOPER, in PATERNOSTER-ROW,
and G. SEYFERT, in ST. MARK'S LANE.

MDCCLXXII.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

THE writer of these letters, besides the advantage which his quality of Resident gave him of observing the genius of the Court of Saxony will appear to have cultivated a good fund of natural talents by reflection and reading; his patriotic and generous sentiments will of course recommend themselves to the British reader; and of his veracity, an unquestionable proof is the agreement of his representations with the following account given of the distress of Saxony, and the minister's

ter's luxury, by the virtuous and intelligent Mr. *Hanway*, in the second volume of his travels.

“ The distressed condition of the
 “ Electorate of Saxony, is occasioned
 “ not more by war and invasion, and
 “ the general depravity of the in-
 “ habitants, than by the iniquity
 “ of a few. — In wealth and pow-
 “ er count Bruhl is incomparably
 “ the greatest man in Saxony. He
 “ is said to have bought estates in
 “ Poland to the amount of twenty
 “ millions of florins, thus laying up
 “ a store out of the reach of the
 “ Saxons, whilst they have no other
 “ satisfaction, than making lampoons
 “ on him and his patroness the queen:
 “ He

“ He has also several estates in Saxony
 “ and moveables to the value of fix
 “ millions of dollars ; withal he owes
 “ large fums. — Count Bruhl is
 “ said to be allowed half a million of
 “ dollars annually ; — He has no
 “ less than three or four hundred
 “ suits of rich cloaths, with boots
 “ and shoes in proportion : He has
 “ collected all the finest colours of
 “ all the finest cloths, velvets, and
 “ filks of all manufactures, besides
 “ laces and embroideries. He calls
 “ for his book of patterns, which
 “ are all numbered, and chuses that
 “ which pleases his fancy for the
 “ day : His library is two hundred
 “ and twenty feet long ; and his gal-
 “ lery of pictures is incomparably
 “ more.

“ more magnificent than the king’s,
 “ and an hundred and fifty fixells long,
 “ which is eighteen more than that
 “ of Versailles: — Saxony is said to
 “ owe forty millions of dollars, the
 “ interest of which, since the late
 “ king’s death, has not been regular-
 “ paid ; — the government securi-
 “ ties are now at a large discount ; —
 “ The revenue of the Elector of
 “ Saxony is computed at 8 millions
 “ of dollars.”

I shall only add, that what stamps
 an additional value on these letters is,
 that an ungrateful and perfidious
 court, piqued at their truth and
 energy, ordered them to be burnt
 at Ratibon, and some other places
 of the Austrian dominions.



L E T T E R I.

Dear SIR,

T seems you so far pity Dresden
 I as to say that every cannon
 shot, which, though above
 six miles distant, you hear at your
 seat, draws from you a heart-felt sigh;
 you will also, from your knowledge of
 my heart, I flatter myself, readily be-
 lieve, that only the beating down of a
 peasant's hut extremely affects me; as,
 to its forlorn inhabitant, no less valuable
 than the most superb palace to its
 wealthy owner: how then can I but join
 in your humane concern for the ruin of
 a city, one of the most beautiful in all
 Germany, and whose inhabitants as lit-
 tle merit their direful fate, as the people
 B of

of Custrin, or the honest rustics in those parts of Brandenburg where the Russians committed such horrid outrages. Yes, my worthy friend, the catastrophe of Dresden powerfully revives in me all the melancholy sensations with which my heart has laboured for the distresses of the innocent of either side, during this war.

Surely my friend cannot doubt, but that the wise and gracious prince, who now lies before Dresden, than whom a truer friend to mankind never existed, has the same compassionate sense of the miseries of that city, as you or I can have ; I should wrong you in questioning it ; you have too much discernment not to perceive in the hero and the king that benign and elevated heart which comprehends all mankind within the circle of its benevolence, and so energetically display'd by the Philosopher of Sans Souci, in his immortal poems, which certainly were not writ to be published
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from the papers found in the cabinet at Dresden, and afterwards made public, that Saxony was not to take part in the war against Prussia, till the king of Prussia should be, in a great measure, reduced; or, according to count Uhlefeld's phrase, till *the knight was unhorsed*; and thus count Bruhl stands disculpated: things, by the untimely detection of this secret league, having taken a turn quite different from his original scheme.

But, Sir, this is the very point wherein count Bruhl is most culpable; in not foreseeing that the king of Prussia might come to the knowledge of this secret league, before it was ripe for execution; it being the capital quality of a statesman to foresee all possible incidents, and provide against them. Were not this the essence of policy, where would be its great difficulty and excellence? Otherwise an old woman, or hare-brained stripling, might make a minister of state. For, to accumulate wealth,

or to squander away the revenue of a nation, requires no great depth of wisdom. But count Bruhl is herein the less excusable, as the privy council of Dresden, in which there is not a member out of whose book this minister does not want a leaf, had more than once remonstrated to him, that this secret league might reach the ears of the king of Prussia; and that he would certainly look on it as a breach of the treaty of Dresden.

But we will for once suppose that these devices had remained undiscovered, and his Prussian Majesty been extremely weakened before Saxony entered on its part; still is not this alliance irreconcilable with sound politics? Count Bruhl could not but be conscious, that to reduce such a prince as the king of Prussia was no easy matter; nay, in a letter of his written some time before, he expressly says, “ That nothing was
“ impossible to the king of Prussia:”

an

an acknowledgment, however, which he little regarded in planning his measures. To hit the moment when Saxony was to throw aside the mask, and draw the sword, was no less critical and hazardous than the whole clandestine combination; by any error in this important point of time, Saxony was sure to suffer: As, for instance, if it had unmasked a little before the battle of Rosbach, when the affairs of the king of Prussia wore a very cloudy aspect, its ruin was not less certain; or if count Bruhl had waited till the king of Prussia were totally vanquished and stripped of all, he must be a rare head-piece to conceive that Russia and Austria would have rewarded his cautious inactivity with any share of their depredations: Countries are not given away for such romantic news as he forged, concerning the Ukraine and Courland; much more specious fictions may be purchased for a trifle from our theoretical politicians.

A constant mark of a narrow genius and a bad cause, two circumstances which but too often meet, is irresolution; a masculine and comprehensive mind, in a just cause, can never be long fluctuating about proper measures and resolutions. The rules of justice are eternal and immutable, and spontaneously occur to a sagacious and well-disposed mind.

I wish, Sir, you would give yourself the trouble carefully and impartially to canvass the conduct of the Saxon minister, from the year 1747, to the breaking out of the present calamitous war, and in all his letters, dispatches, and instructions to the Saxon envoys, you will find a perpetual vacillation and unresolvèdness. He was, indeed, sufficiently resolved that Saxony should join in the assault to be made on the king of Prussia, but how to enter into the confederacy for this iniquitous scheme, without too much exposing Saxony, was the
rub

rub which kept him in constant suspense, as the papers taken in the cabinet at Dresden, and published by the court of Prussia, will at once convince you.

Let me particularly request of you to read this minister's letter of the 8th of March 1753, to count Fleming at Vienna, and this, after the privy council of Dresden had a second time represented to him the danger of these clandestine engagements. Such mean irresolution! Such a jumble of strange incoherent ideas and maxims! Rare specimens of this minister's eminent abilities! But, concluding these lines will find you in your delightful summer-house, to save you the trouble of going to your library, and turning over the memoirs of the present war, as the count's letter lies before me, I send you the following exact transcript of it.

“ My Lord,

“ Mr. Von William going express,
 “ I make use of this opportunity to
 “ transmit to you the journal of the
 “ privy council held on the 3d instant;
 “ as containing its opinion concern-
 “ ing the further engagements proposed
 “ by the court of Vienna to be enter-
 “ ed into at the approaching accession
 “ to the treaty of Russia. This infor-
 “ mation, however, is to be of no fur-
 “ ther service to you, than to let you
 “ see with what eyes the affair is looked
 “ on here, and to apprise you of the
 “ exceptions raised against it; further,
 “ the king does not approve of the pro-
 “ posal, that, on our act of accession,
 “ every party shall reciprocally assist
 “ each other to the utmost of their pow-
 “ er. His Majesty, indeed, on more
 “ equitable and advantageous terms, is
 “ not averse from acceding in time to
 “ the last secret overtures of the court
 “ of Vienna, relatively to such a con-
 “ federacy,

“ federacy, by separate and invio-
 “ lable causes explanatory of the 4th
 “ private article of the treaty of Peterf-
 “ burg; but in this case some advan-
 “ tages are to be granted to us. Thus,
 “ whatever overtures are made to you,
 “ you may receive them *ad referendum*.
 “ I believe that the promises made to us
 “ by the Empreſs Queen, in her decla-
 “ ration of the 4th of May 1745, may
 “ for the future ſerve as a rule of con-
 “ duct.”

What a chaos of crude conceptions
 and jarring determinations! Probably
 the miniſter himſelf, after ſigning the
 letter, did not know his own mind, and
 this will eaſily appear in every circum-
 ſtance, on comparing the letter with the
 federal treaty of Peterſburg, and that of
 partition of 1745; or, as it may be
 termed, for ſharing the lyon’s ſkin be-
 fore he is caught. But ſuch a laborious
 examen is more than the caſe deſerves;
 the tenour of this letter cannot be bet-
 ter

ter exhibited than by a parody of its leading thoughts, the principle of which is also pretty much of a piece with the grand object. Does not the count de Bruhl seem, in reality, to have written to the following purport ?

“ I T is the opinion of men of sense,
 “ in the deliberation inclosed, that, by
 “ throwing oil into the fire, our house
 “ will soon be in a blaze. But all I
 “ mean by sending you this declaration
 “ is, that you may see what an opposi-
 “ tion is made to throwing this oil into
 “ the fire. We will not immediately,
 “ and with all our might and main,
 “ throw oil into the fire, though it is
 “ what time and a good bargain may
 “ bring us to ; but, in such a case, some
 “ *douceurs* must be allowed us, yet these
 “ I foresee will be neither more or less,
 “ than the two logs promised us on the
 “ 3d of May 1745.”

What

What says my friend? Is not this parody the very substance of count Bruhl's letter? And is not the import of both, when rightly considered, the very same? What a strain of policy is this! that the negotiator at Vienna must be informed of the many exceptions raised by the privy council at Dresden against the clandestine and dangerous confederacy then on the anvil, only that he may know them, but without taking any further notice of them.

That the minister should not have been aware of the danger and calamities, which, by this course, he was drawing on Saxony, is morally impossible; and, if they were known to him, why had they no influence on his measures? This is a mystery which requires no long investigation, or rather, in my opinion, is at once seen into; namely, whether Saxony swam or sunk, was what he little troubled himself about.

[This

This extraordinary minion of fortune, who after shooting up, fungus-like, with amazing rapidity, has overspread all Saxony, I have sometimes employed myself in tracing from the commencement of his ministry, and cannot discern in him one single ray of patriotism, one spark of a real concern for the welfare of Saxony. Sway'd by a boundless avarice and ambition, intent only on the aggrandisement of himself and family, he has engrossed all the considerable and lucrative posts; an insatiable desire of wealth, and at the same time the gratification of his vanity and voluptuousness, by a profuseness more than regal, predominate in his soul, and bias his procedures, whilst Saxony is no further considered, than as the soil productive of such delicious fruits; and which, indeed, were it only on this consideration, he should not suffer to be totally ruined.

You,

You, Sir, are so well read in history, that I believe there is not a distinguish'd character in any age unknown to you; but yet, pray can you tell me of any one minister, who, in defiance of the judgment of all esteemable persons, has amassed such treasures, and carried prodigality to such a height. Ministers there have been many, who affected an extravagant splendor, and set no bounds to their expences; but either their personal fortunes were large, or if upstarts, of low fortune, like cardinal Wolsey, they have not, amidst their dissipations, been able to make any great savings. So that to raise a fortune of five or six millions, for, before the war, this was known to be the value of the seats and lands belonging to count Bruhl in Poland and Saxony, with furniture and improvements to enrich his several brothers, so that they splendidly support the titles of count, and in the mean time to make a figure beyond a sovereign prince, are acts which raise count Bruhl above any parallel.

I would

I would not have my friend think that I magnify things, and that there is any hyperbole in my saying that he lives in more pomp than a sovereign prince. During my stay at Dresden, which was from the year 1744 to 1747, I became sufficiently acquainted with every part of the magnificence of count Bruhl's palace, and his household expence, scarce a day passing but I was there; and, since that time, I have visited several courts of kings and electors, where I was no superficial spectator, and I can truly aver to you, that in none of them did the officers particularly attending on the prince and his family, exclusive of the officers of state, equal the number of the several officers in count Bruhl's palace; and, besides all this, so attentive and provident has this minister been in his own concerns, that a friend of mine, who is very intimate with one of count Bruhl's private secretaries, affirm'd to me, that, to secure himself against the vicissitudes of fortune he had very large sums in the banks of Venice, Hamburg, and Amsterdam.

Count Bruhl himself, surely, does not require that the world should believe that all this splendour and pomp can be supported, and such an immense fortune accumulated, by means reconcileable with rectitude and a good conscience ; he must think the world very simple indeed. Who, with a grain of sense, will be led by all the blandishments of his elocution, to imagine that all these things are compassed by fair means ? But if he himself be sensible that the world is not to be blinded concerning the rise of his overgrown wealth, what must be thought of the heart and front of this man, with whom the judgment of the reflective part of the world has not the least weight.

The more enlightened our age is, the more does this contempt of its opinion deserve the indignation of persons of sense and probity ; and it is to be hoped, that some avenger of the public honour will stand forth, and expose the character of this ostentatious count, his private deportment,

portment, and public administration, with the chief circumstances of his life, as a document to posterity that the unanimous and declared sentiments of honest men is not to be over-looked, or insulted with impunity. Such a writer would certainly deserve better of mankind than he who should compose a brace of huge folio's on chronology, heraldry, or the like momentous subjects. Such a piece would probably be an instrument of diminishing the future sufferings of whole nations, which Providence, in its wrath, had cursed with a minister like Bruhl, as the dread of being transmitted to posterity with all their odious colours might be some check on their rapacity and dissipation.

Only consider, that by the grievous burden of imposts and taxes which, long before the war, had been screw'd to the utmost, some hundred thousands were deprived of the comforts of life, of the fruits of their industry, and, I may add, of necessary subsistence, and all to gratify

tify the boundless profusion and insatiable avarice of this minister. What an heart must he have, to whom amidst his riches and luxury, such a consideration never occurred ; or, which is still worse, was so far from making any generous impression, that very probably he conceits millions were born to pine in indigence, only that one single family might riot in affluence.

States are said to be governed with less wisdom than antiently ; and this position is surely verified in Saxony, whose princes, for near two centuries past, have been extremely out in choice of ministers, yet have given themselves up to them with an unreserved confidence ; no longer ago than yesterday, I was very seriously revolving in my mind the modern history of Saxony, and not a single minister can I find, who, besides a want of talents, did not make the aggrandisement of himself the chief scope of his administration ; owning withal,
that

that none of the tribe comes up to count Bruhl. Could it be thought that a state under such administrations, should hold out for two hundred years! So true is the saying of Montagne, that “ Great
 “ must be the strength of the political
 “ band, since it is neither tyranny, nor
 “ bad laws, nor the depravity and ig-
 “ norance of the rulers, which can ea-
 “ sily break it.”

In my next, I shall communicate to you these my reflections on the history of Saxony, the present being already of a length to tire both writer and reader; but you may make yourself sure, that, within a month, you shall receive a letter of a frightful prolixity, by way of amusement in this my dreary solitude; for, believe me, the whole neighbouring country, for two miles round, scarce affords a person worth spending an hour with; and, to my further misfortune, the honest priest is lately gone,

Numa quo devenit & Ancus. HOR.

So

So that, after drinking the waters, and taking my morning ramble about the woods and meadows, I am at a loss how to employ myself; for as to what books I have here, I have read them all over and over, that I have no relief left me but to take pen in hand; and, unless your next brings me a prohibitory mandate, I'll send you writing enough, that you'll be little inclined to continue your complaints about the shortness of my letters.

I was just closing this, when I am favoured with yours of the 21st, wherein you acquaint me, that the siege of Dresden goes on, and that the Austrian governor is determined to hold out to the utmost; and that, on the approach of the Prussian army, he had set fire to all the remaining suburbs, not sparing the orphan-house itself; and, that this may be depended on for certain truth, you having it from a relation just come from the neighbourhood of Dresden.

Indeed

Indeed I little thought that before I had made an end of this letter, I should receive from your hands any accounts which so strongly corroborate the remarks I had made in the beginning, on the dispositions of the Austrians. You cannot but recollect what I writ to you about two years since, concerning the loud clamours with which the Austrians made all Europe ring against the Prussian commandant, who, when the Austrian forces drew near, had caused part of the suburbs of Dresden to be set on fire. I think my words were, 'That whatever friendship for Saxony the Austrians might pretend, they would not scruple doing the like, if they were to defend Dresden against a Prussian army. Now you plainly see they have fully answered my conjecture, tho' little did I then imagine, that ever it would have been in their power, to give this proof of their equity and grateful moderation.

F——t, July 13,
1760.

I am,
Sir, &c.

L E T T E R II.

Dear Sir,

I Have a proposal to make to you, which will save me the trouble of writing, and you of reading the long letter with which I threatened you in my last. Suppose you were to make me happy for a month, by enlivening my doleful solitude with your company: take it into consideration; one or other of the armies may pay your quarters a visit; and then think what trouble, disgust, apprehensions, and expence, you save yourself by being from home: the length of the way can be no objection; sixteen miles* are but two days moderate travelling, and I'll send a nag to meet you at L——, and though the worst half way, it shall easily amble you hither between fun and fun. Only weigh my request with good will, and all the apparent difficulties and impediments

* One German mile is five English.

will vanish, or means for surmounting them will occur to you. Bring your cousin, or whom you please, the more of such persons as your friends, the better company we shall be.

With these pleasing expectations, I return to my promise of laying before you my reflections on the modern history of Saxony, in which you will see how much, and how long, this unhappy country has suffered by a series of mal-administration; but the hopes of expatiating on this subject in pleasing colloquy with you, will so far affect this letter, that I shall reduce it within a much narrower compass than I proposed when I was writing my last.

The whole succession of the electors of the Albert line, the two first, Maurice and Augustus, excepted, appear to have been but indifferently fitted for government, blindly following the instigations of ill-chosen ministers, and very
little

little concerned about the welfare of their subjects. Maurice, to whom his family owed the electorate, compassed it indeed by the most refined strains of policy, but with no less injury towards the Ernest line; and, as for the Protestant religion, of which he made profession, his real zeal for it may be seen in his siding with Charles the Vth, who aimed at the extirpation of Protestants. Herein he manifestly trampled on all the obligations of religion and consanguinity; and, as far as in him lay, promoted the abolition of the former; and of this iniquity the wages were the Electorate, of which, by an unwarrantable act of despotism, Charles deprived the Ernest line, contrary to the constitution of the empire, and all the laws of natural justice. It must, however, be owned, that by his subsequent conduct he made amends for the detriment which religion had sustained thro' his means, compelling the Emperor to a toleration of Protestantism; yet, herein, the im-

probity of his politics appears the more flagrantly. If to take arms against the Emperor was such a crime as to deserve the confiscation of estate, and forfeiture of honours ; if, for this cause the electoral cap was taken from the Ernest line to dignify his head, with what right or conscience could he wear it, after incurring the very same guilt, with this difference only, that the current of the times, and some incidents were more favourable.

His brother and successor Augustus, was worth all the other sovereigns of the Albert line put together ; a real father of his subjects, ardent for their welfare, a wise ruler and magnanimous prince ; very circumspect in the choice of his ministers, and of such an excellent oeconomy, that without any sordid parsimony, or in the least squeezing his subjects, he redeemed all mortgages and alienations of the electoral lands, and augmented his revenue above one half.

Had

Had it pleased heaven to bless Saxony with only such sovereigns, how happy for the people, and what a different figure would the reigning family have made !

But, of all the succeeding electors, the two Christians, and the four John George's, little good can be said, and some parts of their conduct are very censurable. Princes of little penetration ; making a bad choice of their officers and ministers ; driven to and fro, like a reed, by the court cabals and intrigues ; implicitly complying with every suggestion of their ministers and favourites, and indolently conniving at their enormous accumulation of wealth, drawn from the marrow of the land ; princes totally void of any particular affection for their subjects ; and, instead of taking the reins of government into their hands, wantoning in sensuality and luxury ; and some not even free from that scandalous vice of drunkenness. Such

were these electors ; and, if my friend thinks the portraiture charged, I can refer him to authentic histories, and some of them printed with the most gracious licence of his Polish Majesty, Elector of Saxony : And give me leave to add a few concise remarks on the whole interval of these weak, I may say, vicious princes.

The whole history of the thirty years war *, swarms with instances of the sad imbecillity of the Saxon court. These electors were almost the only check in

* So called from the term of its long duration : was originally owing to the Emperor Ferdinand II. in order to abolish Protestantism in Germany ; but cardinal Richlieu, with a view of weakening the House of Austria, supported the German Protestants, tho' at the same time he was labouring to extirpate them in France. Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, from purer motives, took the Protestant cause in hand, marched into Germany, and was in a fair way of bringing the bigotted House of Austria to terms, when he fell at the battle of Lutzen, in which, however, his troops obtained the victory ; but his death was a fatal event to the Protestants.

all Germany, against the despotism which the emperor Ferdinand II. meditated ; and such umbrage did their power give him, that had the throne of Saxony been, at that time, filled by a wise and resolute prince, who would have signified to the emperor that he would suffer no injury to be done to the liberties of Germany, and have kept himself in a posture to make good his words, very probably the thirty years war would never have been heard of ; a year had brought the troubles in Bohemia to a period, without involving all Germany in them. Whereas the Saxon minister, bribed by the Spanish gold of Austria, made use of their envy against the Elector Palatine, on account of his rank as *Director* of the Evangelical body ; and a groundless and impolitic rancour against the reformed, to prepossess his master against the Elector Palatine, and draw him in, not only publicly to approve of the tyrannical procedures of the Imperial Court against

that distressed prince, but powerfully to assist the Emperor, and support him in all his undertakings, though in the highest degree unjustifiable, despotic, and pernicious to the Protestant religion.

No sooner did Ferdinand II. imagine that he had no longer need of this weak and venal court, than he treated it with contemptuous haughtiness; and, in return for its imprudent assistance towards the oppression of Germany, came and laid siege to Leipfick, than which Saxony had not a more opulent and considerable city. Now the court of Saxony saw itself necessitated to throw itself into the arms of the king of Sweden, whose overtures for an alliance, contrary to all sound policy, and to the great detriment of the Protestant cause, it had before publicly rejected. Here it gave another specimen of its wrong-headedness; engaging to pay that monarch a very considerable sum, to send him the electoral prince as an hostage, evacuate
Witten-

Wittenburg, and punish the evil-minded ministers; however, most of these onerous articles the king of Sweden generously remitted. Again, scarce had the glorious victory at Leipfick delivered Saxony from its fears of the Imperialists, than the Saxon ministry, through folly or corruption, or very possibly both, diverted their sovereign from improving the advantage, by advancing into the Emperor's hereditary dominions, as had been concerted with the Swedish hero, thus giving the Emperor time to recover himself; and not long after, that ductile court, *O nefas dictu!* openly veered about to the lawless Emperor's interest.

Had the Lutheran electors of the House of Saxony been endued with the spirit of prophecy, could they have foreseen that their descendants, *like the dog to the vomit*, would have returned to Popery, their conduct, almost on all occasions, could not well have been more dis-

favourable to Protestantism. The peace of Prague which Saxony took on itself to conclude with the Emperor in behalf of the whole Protestant cause, what a stroke was it to Lutheranism ! By this peace the Protestant religion could promise itself a duration only of forty years, just as if it had been then determined, that Saxony should depart from Lutheranism at that term ; and, when matters were mended by the happy peace of Westphalia, which established the safety of the Protestant religion on a solid foundation, what did that unaccountable court do, but openly protest against it ! A most perverse measure, or wretched blunder, both in regard to the Protestant cause, or policy.

If the conduct of the Saxon court in regard of the Protestant religion be so very culpable, not more wisdom or steadiness has it ever shewn in the affair of the succession to the duchy of Juliers, and all other pretensions of the
Electoral

Electoral House; but whilst the sole aim of ministers is to enrich themselves, things will ever go on at this scandalous rate; and this will be the fate of every nation, when the helm of sovereignty is in weak hands. Take a view of all the families in Saxony distinguished for riches, then proceed to their genealogy, and you will find that the architect of this opulence was some voracious favourite or minister.

Under such management, and it took place on the demise of Augustus I. now near two hundred years ago, what could be expected but extreme confusion, and deficiencies in the finances of Saxony? and these increased so, that about the year 1660, the treasury became insolvable, and made a formal bankruptcy. What a pity it is that the present downfall of the Saxon finances had not been retarded only sixteen years longer, as then this second failure might have served to celebrate the jubilee of the former.

But

But it is not ministers only who have sucked the blood of Saxony ; the mistresses also have insatiably gorged themselves with it. John George IV. will ever stand branded in history for his servile devotedness to one of these female leeches, which was such as is scarce to be accounted for by the ordinary workings of human nature ; and, according to the genius of that age, not a few looked on it as the effect of some forcery. At the same time, VonHoymb *

* This minister did his pillaged country justice on himself, by putting an end to his life, with an handkerchief fastened to an hook, and left this note upon his table, for his two servants who attended on him at the castle of Konigstein where he had been committed prisoner.

“ Be prudent, make no noise or alarm ; untie me immediately, put me to bed, and then shut the door after you, by bolting it when you are out, which you may do by means of this packthread ; by this nobody will know that you have been in my chamber. The world will, doubtless, believe I dyed of an apoplexy ; if you perform my orders directly and faithfully, my family will pay you 1000 ducats on sight of this note.”

the

the prime minister drained the country of its superabundant blood, with which his descendants now support their title in such wanton luxury. This blood-sucker, by an odd imitation of good economists, who keep a regular account of receipts and issues, had a diary of his extortions, and of presents made to him with this singular title, *A list of all who have been obliged to pay me homage*. But this was a register he had occasion afterwards woefully to rue, when called to an account by the successor of John George, afterwards king Frederic Augustus. This has been a warning to succeeding ministers, who now pill and poll without a remembrancer to rise in judgment against them.

It might reasonably have been expected, that king Frederic Augustus, after his severe prosecutions of his deceased brother's minister and mistress, would have carefully guarded against such abuses; for were not this his determined resolution,

resolution, there was little equity or generosity in his procedure; but the history of this prince is so fresh in your memory, that you cannot but know that never prostitute had a more servile cull, nor minister a more indolent master. The count of Cosel had an unlimited ascendant over him; and as count Flemming impatiently put in for an equal share of the booty, this competition produced a perpetual enmity between those presumptuous ministers. It was this prince's daily task, to be reconciling his ministers and mistresses, whereas it became him to hold a strict rein over both. The immense sums squandered away by that king on his group of mistresses are well known, and the accumulations of the ministers are no secret. Flemming alone, besides the large estates of Ritzthum, Wackerbach, and Watzdorff, left 12 ton * of gold in specie, and the harvest of many other ministers come little short of his.

* A ton of gold is something above 10,000 l.

According

According to the most moderate computation, under this blessed government, mistresses and ministers cost the good-natured Saxons not less than twenty millions, besides twenty-three millions which, under the same government, the king of Sweden drew from Saxony; and to these premises may be added the charges of an unfortunate war of eighteen years with Sweden, not to mention the prodigious magnificence and profuseness of this king; that it is inconceivable how so small a country as Saxony could furnish such supplies. *

* Saxony, which is the north division of Germany, and itself divided into the Upper and Lower Circles, lies between lat. 50 and 55, N. long. 8 and 18, E. Of the 2707 horse, 13,192 foot, or 82,891 German florins (each 40 pence) which, by the matricula, the Circles are to furnish for the service of the Empire, the Upper Circle of Saxony contributes 278 horse, 1167 foot, or 7272 florins, and the Lower 321 foot, 1053 horse, or 8992 florins. The forces usually kept on foot, even in peace, by the Elector of Saxony, amount to between 25 and 30,000 men, besides 10,000 belonging to the several dukes of Saxony.

Kings,

Kings, indeed, are men, and it cannot with any reason be desired that they should raise themselves above human nature, and assume the spirituality of angels.

Accordingly, my great quarrel with sovereigns is not so much at their keeping mistresses, and procuring the most exquisite enjoyments of life, but this I think unpardonable in them, that they should be so weak as to give their mistresses and favourites such power over them, so that the welfare and destiny of the subject shall lie at their discretion. Perhaps, my friend never heard of a passage of the regent duke of Orleans : A mistress of his once taking upon her to interfere in state affairs, and the disposal of favours, he led her up to a looking-glass, saying, *View this pretty poll of thine, it is indeed finely turned for love, but, by the mass, was never designed for state affairs.*

The

The Saxon writers were once in a humour of giving the surname of *Great* to this king, though known in history only by his disasters, defeats, and wrong measures, the very best part of his character being magnificence ; but that adulatory epithet was soon dropped. Had success attended his army, had he not humbled himself to the king of Sweden with a pusillanimity scarce heard of before, yet his scandalous weakness towards his mistress and ministers exclude him from the surname of *Great*. How becoming was the open familiarity of count Fleming with this king, of which baron Loen relates this pretty instance : *Brother*, says this minister to his Lord and Sovereign, *if thou standest not to thy word, I wash my hands of thee.*

The easy Saxons felt the grandeur of the former government in the greatness of the sums levied on them ; yet is it a truth which may be demonstrated, that the country was not half so much taxed

as it has been under the ministry of count Bruhl, and long before the present war : At the expiration of the former government, great were the expectations from the present, and the country universally exulted in the hopes of the golden days which it was to enjoy under his present Majesty's auspicious reign. That the hopes of the then Electoral Prince were extremely brilliant, appears, among other things, from the pleasant adventure of the nominal prince Liefgen, which cannot be unknown to you ; for, I believe, there has not been a soul living within twelve miles of Dresden for this thirty years past, who has not heard of it ; and, if I am not mistaken, this romantic prince Liefgen ended her days about twelve years since in the house of correction at Waldheim.

As it is rare to find an individual satisfied with his condition, the same disposition is seen in aggregate bodies in nations,

nations, who are never in thorough good humour with the government for the time being ; and this, in reality is what gives birth to the excessive ideas of a blessed change ; hence it is that our ears are every-where filled with such pretty anecdotes about the successor ; all tending to strengthen the flattering notions entertained of his prudence, mildness, courage, and other amiable princely qualities ; and though, out of ten cases, the people have found themselves unhappily mistaken in nine, yet will not the besotted herd be brought off from their delusive expectations, till states and rulers shall be no more.

But, whither am I roving ? I quite forget that this letter was not to be of the length of the last ; therefore I shall close my remarks on the Saxon history with reminding you, that count Bruhl had a predecessor, and in some respects, a colleague in the ministry, who was by no means to seek in the science of making
 hay

hay while the sun shines. You know before-hand, that I mean the count now the prince of Sulkowsky, who, at the beginning of this reign was only page to the present king of Poland, and a captain of foot, yet the same year saw him minister and general; and who can doubt of his qualifications for these eminent posts, having within four years raised a fortune of four millions? Yet is this a trifle, when compared with some other acquisitions. I conclude with assuring you of my perpetual esteem and affection, longing to exchange the faint expressions of the pen for a cordial embrace; and, in a passionate expectation of you, remain,

Sir, &c.

F——t, July 25,
1760.

L E T T E R III.

HOW are all my rapturous hopes quash'd by yours of the 8th instant! Full of desire, and in a certain confidence of your compliance with my affectionate request to embrace you here, I eagerly unsealed the letter; but, as I read the preliminaries with which you soften your refusal, a dark cloud overspread the hilarity of my mind; and when I came to your decisive declaration, that for the present it was utterly impossible for us to enjoy that mutual happiness, I became lost in a gloomy night of melancholy.

One part of your preliminaries is no more than I foresaw, yet allow me to say, I do not think it of sufficient weight; this is your objection about the harvest. Though you are better skilled in the management of an estate than I pretend to, and keep your lands in your own
hands,

hands, yet I know you to be wiser in the choice of your servants than our princes before-mentioned, they being all honest industrious people, which, with the excellent order and method you observe in all things, will safely allow of your absence in harvest time. Besides, I thought that in these calamitous times, when all the landed gentlemen are very great sufferers, you would overlook a petty inconveniency.

But it is something particular that the very circumstance on which I grounded my hopes of your consent, you make your chief plea against it; namely, that the operations of the armies may extend to your country. You say that this apprehension requires the utmost dispatch for getting in the harvest; and that for any land owner willingly to be absent from his estate at such a juncture, would be very much standing in his own light; it being known from general experience that those lands are always infinitely worse

worse treated by friend and foe, whose owners are not on the spot. The justness of this motive I now acknowledge, though nothing of it occurred to me before; but, at the same time, I declare that you are an example above my imitation; for, indeed, I would rather lose half my estate, than expose myself to the several outrages I might meet with from Hussars, Croats, Pandours, Ulans, Tolpatches, Cossacks, Calmucks, and others of such savage names, with which, to the misfortune of Germany, we are come to be so well acquainted.

Thus I must renounce the hopes of those agreeable hours which I had promised myself in the conversation of my worthy friend: You formally sentence me to divert my leisure hours by writing long letters, then add this lenitive; that, if it will be of any comfort to me, you promise to give my letters two or three readings over.

But

But there is something very merry in your intimation that one of the best amusements of my solitude, will be to write the life of count Bruhl, as of benefit to the world in general, and a just revenge of those distresses which he has brought on whole provinces.

I set up for an author ! Would not you in your heart say, *What does Saul among the Prophets?* Did I feel in myself the talents of an author, I would scarce engage in such a critical affair ; you know I still have some tenures in Saxony, and some way or other it might transpire, that I was the author ; now can I expect from the generosity of the world that it will make good to me any damage which may result from my patriotical zeal for the public welfare ? Little would count Bruhl imitate cardinal Mazarine. A man of letters had published many home truths against him with a great asperity of stile, the cardinal sent for him ; he appeared, all pale, and trembling for
fear,

fear, expecting a prison at least; whereas, after speaking to him with the greatest affability and apparent candour, and excusing himself that he had not before rewarded a person of his learning and merit, being obseded by crouds of boisterous creatures, who, as it were by downright violence, wrested all favours out of his hands, immediately gave him a good fat benefice, and thus dismissed the author, and turned the acrimonious satyrift into a zealous encomiaft.

No indeed fuch gentlenefs and policy is not to be expected in count Bruhl : I know his temper to be rather that of cardinal Richlieu, and other despotic minifters, with whom it was an unpardonable crime to difplay in lively colours the tyranny which they exercifed over their fellow creatures, reducing noblemen to fuch ftreights as might enfeeble the natural vigour of their minds, and the induftrious artificer to penury, fpreading indigence and mifery through all ranks

D

to

to compass some execrable political view ; whereas the welfare of the people in peace and plenty, is the highest policy. Bruhl has already given sufficient indications, what any who exercise their wit on his character are to expect ; you remember that promising genius, our fellow-student at Leipstick, about twenty-four years ago, the favourite of all the professors, and the delight of all polite companies ; and who, we heard in Holland, was, in 1740, obliged to leave Leipstick, for a satyr of his composing against count Bruhl ; and the poor printer and publisher were both severely foused for their share in it.

Where can this transcendent person now be ? It was then given out that he had taken the way to Geneva ; but, from his silence, I conclude that he is discharged from this life. Else, what a prominent object for his nervous pen would he now have in count Bruhl's life ! If, at that time, this minister afforded mat-
ter

ter for satire, his account of guilt is now most enormously swelled. There was a man qualified to write the life of his *Illustrious and Noble Excellence*; and most willingly would I furnish him with all the materials within my knowledge.

But your desire is, that being not indisposed for writing long letters, I should entertain you with all that I know of the minister: that I can lend an ear to. You say that having lived continually in the country, you never so much as saw the person of this minister, and that all you heard of him, except in the public papers, seems to come from such, as you think, have been but superficially informed. I cheerfully enter on everything for your entertainment; but I must previously conjure you, by the sacred bands of our friendship, that no person in the world, not even your lady, may have a sight of these letters, though her curiosity never out-runs her discretion. I pray either burn them, or tie

them up in a packet with those of the charming S——, once the adored idol of your enamoured heart. These I am sure you carefully conceal; and thus, within them, mine will rest secure from discovery.

HENRY Count BRUHL, Prime Minister, by public declaration, to the King of Poland, Elector of Saxony, and who, at the same time, holds almost all the other considerable posts of Saxony, and to whom belong a great number of baronies, lordships, and estates, both in Poland and Saxony, is the youngest son of Mr. Bruhl, privy counsellor to the duke of Weissenfels; and having advanced himself to a height, and in a manner scarce to be paralleled in the whole world, promoted his three eldest brothers to the dignity of counts, and conferred on them the most lucrative and honourable employments; one was a privy counsellor, and lived at Martinikirchen; the second master of the horse, and

and the third general and commander of the *Tentonic* order; but the two last are gone to receive the reward of their righteousness; and whether the privy counsellor is yet among the living, is what I cannot positively say.

The family of Bruhl must be allowed some degree of nobility, however misinformed or splenetic persons have given him out to be of much meaner lineage; and this especially prevails abroad; But this is an inconsequential point,

Nobility of blood,
A sandy bottom, and fallacious good;
The nobleman is he, whose noble mind
Is fill'd with in-born worth, unborrow'd
from his kind.

and I think pope Sixtus V. pleasantly ridiculed the pride of birth, when the word *illustrious* was used of any family; the old gentleman who you know, when a boy, drove hogs, *Io sono di una illustrissima casa*, alluding to his father's cottage being so out of repair that the sun *illustrated* every part of it; and these

words which Ovid puts in the mouth of Ulysses, are what every man of sentiment and spirit will subscribe to ;

At genus & proavos, & quae non fecimus ipsi,

Vix ea nostra voco.

The original estate of the family of Bruhl was Ganglofs-Sommern, a considerable mannor near Weiffenfce in Thuringen ; this family, however, became reduced, and the father of our prime minister saw himself under a necessity of selling all his remaining land to his sovereign the duke of Weiffenfels ; but the line of Weiffenfels coming to fail, and his estates reverting to the Electoral House, count Bruhl was not wanting to intimate his desire of being in possession of the original family-estate ; and his bountiful sovereign the king of Poland not only granted him Ganglofs-Sommern but added to it the greatest half of the bailiwick of Weiffenfels, the villages of which lay near the Bruhl estate, likewise a lake of several miles in extent, which the last duke had caused to be drained.

Thus Ganglofs-Sommern might pafs for a confiderable lordſhip, and accordingly, ſuch it was declared.

It is a ſtanding maxim, allowed by all civilians, that the domains of electorates and principalities cannot be legally alienated ; theſe, and many other acquiſitions, ſettled on count Bruhl, from the Saxon domains, ſhew that he muſt have relied on two future contingencies as certain: That the ſucceſſors in the Electorate of Saxony would be a ſett of indolent drones, without any concern about their finances, and the good of the ſtate ; and that the helm of government and the miniſterial authority, would remain in his family, which would be as the *Maires du Palais*, under the weak kings of the Merovingian line in France. For, had he not made a certain account of this, had he imagined that, after him, another miniſter might ariſe, and of a different family, this ingroſſment of the Electoral domains, was one of the moſt unadvise-

able things he could set about; as, in case of a fall, this was a capital charge against him; or, after his death, even against his family: that he, who by virtue of his oath, as president of the treasury, was bound to the conservation of the Electoral domains, had obtained such alienations of them for himself.

Unquestionably, you have been told, that the Bruhl family is originally of Poland; but, with submission to the complaisant Polish nobility, and their solemn acknowledgements of it at the Dyet, I assure you, that you or I might as well claim kin with Poland. In Thuringen, where several noble families, are by the female side allied to that of Bruhl, this genealogy is made a mere jest of. About eighteen years ago, I had in my hands the genealogical tree of the Verlepfes, who can boast the same person for their grandfather, as the Most Noble and Puissant Lord, His Excellency the Prime Minister, Count Bruhl; and, though it
goes

goes up to eight generations, not a word is there of any Polish ancestor. But now, perhaps, it is moulded, according to this new genealogy ; and the Polish nobles themselves have their gybes on this new-fangled piece of vanity, and the purchase of it, which was between 20, or 30,000 rix dollars, every deputy having been prevailed on by the usual argument. Some received favours immediately from the king, others had 1, 2, or 300 ducats for their vote, just as they knew how to make their market. Having mentioned the Dyet, behold the figure it made at the election of his present Majesty's father : The Palatines to the number of above 100,000, met in the field of election, near Warsaw ; all the noblesse were on horseback, except some too poor to buy a horse, who appeared on foot, with old rusty scythes in their hands, distinguished only by the loftiness of their looks, which spoke their high sense of their dignity : These were gained over to Augustus, by a lusty dram and a crown to each.

The

In this genealogy, his illustrious excellency had a double drift; as his family obtained not only the denization, but was admitted, in the most solemn manner, an antient Polish family; he and his sons became capable of holding any crown offices, and starosties, or governments, in Poland; and it was not long before he and his eldest son were created starosts, besides other preferments.

This was turning the penny pretty well; to lay out twenty or thirty thousand rix dollars, when only the annual produce of the offices and starosties, amounted to the latter sum; the starosty of Warsaw, which was conferred on the minister's eldest son, is of itself, a very luscious bit.

The minister's second scope here was, that his Excellence and his family, by virtue of the great privilege of the Polish nobility, were secured, at all events,
should

should the king's successors happen to open their eyes, and call him or his family to an account ; not that his Excellency had any cause for such an apprehension, but it is better to be armed against exigencies, which, not unfrequently, break forth contrary to all appearances. If such an alteration should come to pass, his Excellency, as a Polish nobleman, would be safe ; for however his brother nobles might stand affected towards him, they would not be wanting to oppose any breach of their privileges, lest it should be brought into a precedent.

His Excellency, in his early youth, was a page at the court of Weissenfels, and afterwards went in the same quality to the court of the late king of Poland, Frederic Augustus ; where he was soon appointed a page of the presence. This was the spring whence flowed all his subsequent grandeur ; these are certain facts, and known to be so all over the world ;

world ; a medal was struck in Holland, about twenty-three years ago, representing the three chief ministers at that time, of the king of Poland ; as it were supporting the throne, with this inscription :

Es find unsrer drey,

Twey Pagen und ein Laquay.

Which may be thus Englished,

Though now so mighty, in us three,

Two Pages and a Skip you see.

Count Sulkowsky likewise owes his fortune to his having been a page ; and, as for count Hennicke ; he is known to have wore a livery till his thirtieth year, when his master procured him to be made a receiver in the excise ; on which he had the farther good fortune to marry a maid of honour, the present countess of Hennicke. Now we soon see him surveyor of the excise at Lutzen, where I myself have conversed with some persons, now pretty well in years, who used to be daily in company with him, and they have often told me, that they

saw nothing in him above other men, except that he was a stout toper. Thence he was made a commissioner of the excise, one of the treasury of Zeits, afterwards first treasurer-general, till he gradually rose to the ministry; and he, as some proof of his capacity, when he was called away to give an account of his stewardship, left in land and money near a million, which he had found means to squeeze out of poor Saxony.

Thus providence always wise and gracious, sports with sublunary dignities, perhaps that we may be the more sensible of their inexpressible littleness, and convince us that our real nobility and elevation can consist only in moral perfections, and mental pre-eminence. I will not take upon me to assert that the circumstance of the above-mention'd satyrical medal is in every respect true, though I have it from men of veracity, who said they had seen more than one of them. We know that Craut, partly
under

under that discerning princ Frederic I. of Prussia, rose from a boy behind the compter to be paymaster-general of the army, and at length minister of state; but he was to have been called to an account; this storm he diverted by a well-acted lunacy, and dying left an immense estate; however the king laid his hands on a considerable share of it, by way of restitution.

We are sometimes told, and I remember to have met with it in print, that Bruhl studied at Leipfick, but this I take upon me to contradict; a worthy old gentleman, a relation of mine, who still holds an employment in the court of Weiffenfels, and knew the present count Bruhl all the first part of his life, having told me about twenty years ago, that he went from the court of Weiffenfels directly to that of Dresden; and it is little probable that a page of the presence should be at the university; that would have been a phenomenon indeed,

deed, so that this report does him more honour than he deserves; as to the count's vast and splendid library, which exceeds all that can be imagined of it, that I conclude he collected, not so much as a scholar, but for a piece of furniture, that he might be wanting in no part of magnificence and profusion.

You have read Plutarch's fine treatise on the utility of learning to a prince; his arguments carry the strongest conviction with them; but if this be applicable to sovereigns, how much more necessary may learning be said to be to ministers? All a prince has to do, is to maintain things in their proper relations but the minister is to foresee events, to penetrate into the grounds of all occurrences, and to know and select the necessary measures, and the best manner and time of executing them. Who can be equal to this without knowledge? and, in my opinion, the most valuable knowledge is that of things and their properties,

properties, together with their relations and reciprocal influences.

None but a pedant will say that the best place of acquiring this knowledge is the university; however, whether the most ready avenue to it be conversation with the world, or reading choice authors, it is an implement which ministers, who would not be in danger of committing errors every instant, must indispensibly furnish themselves with. Especially, I do not see how a minister can be without a knowledge of history, which, in its maxims, and the connections of events, can alone instruct him in planning measures, and foreseeing consequences, but this is not of the kind that is to be learnt by conversation, no more than the laws of nations, and their several interests and constitutions, and other branches of knowledge which it would be absurd to suppose may be dispensed with in a minister: It is to the want of this knowledge that are chiefly
owing.

owing most of the false steps committed by statesmen; and a critical enquiry into count Bruhl's measures, throughout the whole course of his ministry, would plainly shew him an utter stranger to this knowledge. Indeed, how should he have come by it! Brought up amidst the gewgaws, and tumult of a court, and early engaged in political intrigues and the pursuits of ambition, it would be a wonder if he had husbanded time to turn over books.

Count Bruhl immediately became a favourite of the late king of Poland; he rapidly past through the honours of lord of the bed-chamber, and groom of the stool, till he made his way to the ministry; there goes a tale concerning the specimen of his abilities, by which he gained the preference in the favour of the late Frederic Augustus.

It is said that a courier came once with dispatches of the highest importance

ance, and which he was ordered to deliver into no other hands than those of the king himself, and an immediate answer was to be returned. Bruhl being at that time page of the presence, the king sent him away for Pauli, secretary to the cabinet council ; but the latter he found so overcome with wine, that it would have been in vain to have brought him. Bruhl, perceiving the king to be in an extreme perplexity, offered to draw up the answer to the dispatches ; and, it seems did it so much to his majesty's satisfaction, that from that hour Frederic Augustus distinguished him in his favour.

The truth of this story, my worthy friend, is very problematic ; Pauli, secretary to the cabinet, and of great influence there, also president of the college of war, was excessively given to drinking ; it was grown habitual with him at entertainments, or if alone, to indulge himself in intemperate draughts, and this was not unknown to the king, who

who used to say, *That it was only in the forenoon that he had a Pauli* ; and this was not of that social kind of inebriation, very common among the ministers and secretaries at Vienna, by a brisk circulation of glasses at dinner, and never carried to the total extinction of reason. No, Pauli's drunkenness was so beastly, that it unfitted him for any kind of business ; and, at last, proved fatal to him, for one afternoon, in one of these excesses, he fell from a window into the street, where he ignominiously expired.

Allowing the truth of the circumstance of secretary Pauli's drunkenness, yet the other part I much question ; Frederick Augustus, the late king of Poland, was not a prince who would conclude on any thing, without the joint advice of his ministers ; consequently, the more important the case was the sooner would he send for them ; and, within that time, somebody surely would be found capable of framing the
an-

answer : Further, it is not easy to imagine any affair so very urgent, as not to bear a delay of a few hours ; I have also seen several French letters, written by count Bruhl's own hand, since he came to be minister ; the stile, I own, is not to be found fault with ; but, on the other hand, I saw nothing of that Attic elegance, that force of expression, as to make a man of sense so hugely taken with the writer ; and, when a page, it is not to be supposed that he was master of such a captivating phraseology ; certainly his stile must have been polished and improved by the long practice and variety of affairs in which it has since been exercised.

There is no need of any such tales to make known the method or accident by which count Bruhl became ingratiated with the late king of Poland ; though his stature be very far below the middle size, yet is he perfectly well shaped and of a most winning carriage.

His

His affability to all his inferiours knows no bounds; they stand equally charmed and amazed at his condescension; at least, such I knew him about twelve years ago; what alteration time may have wrought in him I know not; from these profusions of courtesy to persons of lower rank, it is easy to conceive his abject deportment towards his sovereign; his sollicitude to preserve himself in favour: If, to these attractive practices, you add his agreeable person, the gracefulness of his attitude, and a lively wit, there is no need of any tales to make us conceive how he could insinuate himself into the favour of a monarch, with whom appearances took, and who did not trouble himself about penetrating into the recesses of the human mind.

I must own, that the first time I waited on this minister, I was more charm'd with him than with any person I ever knew in the whole world; nothing came
from

from him, but *Your intirely devoted and humble servant* ; *You may command me in any thing* : These were his very words, and frequently repeated ; an opportunity of serving me, and testifying his regard for me, would be above all things, most welcome. You know that, when at the university, I did not use to be duped by fair words ; but here I was deceived by my own maxims. Since I was eighteen years of age, it has been my custom, when any one made me extraordinary protestations of friendship and good will, to take a survey of their physiognomy ; I examined all their lineaments, and pierced into their grimaces ; these generally betray the heart ; but here all appeared candour and integrity, for a more honest countenance, and a more pleasing aspect than that of count Bruhl, there cannot be in the world.

But, in my farther transactions with him both relatively to my own private concerns,

concerns, and the affairs of the commission with which I was honour'd, I soon perceived, that all these animated protestations were mere sounds; I found that the flood of politenesses with which he continued to deluge me, were no more than so many mechanical motions, to which his body had been long habituated, without his soul having any meaning in them; and it was more than once on my lips, to say to him, *I beseech your Excellency fewer compliments, and more sincerity.*

I have afterwards had frequent occasion of observing, that all who carry their civility to excess, and make use of high flown compliments, are one and all, of such a cast, that the more we promise ourselves any thing from them, the more we shall be disappointed; and, to me, there is nothing more nauseous, than that flow of compliments which rises above all probability and discretion. To every man of sense such a behaviour is a downright
affront;

affront; as, in these unmeaning effusions, a minister, in effect, says, “ I look
 “ on thee to be a simple fellow, who
 “ wilt greedily swallow these words.”

However, it is only observing the professions of such people, and they will be found themselves to betray the little share their heart has in their compliments. I was once with a late secretary at war in an eminent court; he likewise dealt much in over-strained compliments, and excessive politeness: Word was brought that a young foreign prince whose father was a major in the service of that state, was coming to wait on him. I was for with-drawing; “ Poh, poh,
 “ (said the minister) it is only a young
 “ prince;” But, on this young prince’s making his appearance, the minister respectfully moved towards him, saying;
 “ I am covered with confusion, that
 “ your Illustrious Highness should prevent me in my duty; it was just in
 “ my thoughts most humbly to have
 “ laid

“laid myself at your Highness’s feet.”

And at this rate he went on, overwhelming the young prince, who was a genteel discreet youth, about 13 years of age, and his tutor, with such a flood of compliments, that they scarce knew what to answer; but this, at the same time, was a useful document to me, what stress I had to lay on all the assurances of affection, and friendship, which he had just poured forth to me, in the in the very same breath.

Whilst the late king of Poland was living, count Bruhl seems to have had very little share in the good graces of the present king; the knowing courtiers pretend, that the then electoral prince even carried it coldly to his father’s favourite; and, on the other hand, that count Bruhl seemed not at all solicitous in making his court to the presumptive successor. The heart of the electoral prince was at that time possessed by count Sulkowsky, groom of the bed-

E chamber,

chamber, and captain of foot; and who as a page, having grown up together with the prince, had now an unlimited ascendant over him: And as these two favourites of the father and the son shewed little inclination towards an intimacy, it was the opinion of the court that count Bruhl's fortunes had reached their zenith, at the demise of Augustus the Second.

But greatly mistaken were they in this calculation; at the time of the decease of Augustus II. which happened in Poland in the beginning of the year 1733, count Bruhl was also in that kingdom: Instead of sinking at so unexpected a stroke as the loss of the most bountiful of masters, he turned his thoughts to secure his footing under the new government; and finding means to lay hands on the crown, and other regalia of Poland, he reached Saxony before the magnates of the kingdom could take any measures on such a subitaneous event.

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The electoral prince, now Elector of Saxony, must naturally look with a propitious eye on the author of such a notable piece of service, as delivering up to him the regalia of Poland; and who, withal, assured him, that he had concerted measures with his friends to turn the scale of election in his Royal Highness's favour: Count Bruhl further addressed himself to count Sulkowsky, the prince's minion, in the strongest expressions, at which he has a most bewitching gift, of the most perfect friendship and devotedness, and that there was nothing in which he should not account it an honour to be employed as his instrument.

Count Bruhl very prudently perceiv'd that count Sulkowsky would rise to a resplendent fortune, and to oppose it would be working his own destruction; he considered, that this count being a papist, agreeable to the profession of the late king, was incapable of any ministerial or national employment; that the

post of first lord of the bed-chamber, which he himself had held under the late king, would be most suitable to count Sulkowsky's view; accordingly he made an offer to the count to resign that very honourable post, leaving the equivalent to his majesty's pleasure. This pleased, and count Bruhl was nominated first commissioner of the treasury, and general-director of the excise. For this circumstance, that count Bruhl himself made the first offer of resigning his post, my authority is the person to whom the present prince of Sulkowsky told it.

This was the expedient by which count Bruhl made count Sulkowsky himself the instrument of his promotion under the present government; it was far from Sulkowsky's thoughts to apprehend any-thing from Bruhl; the preference in the favour of his prince he imagined secured to him beyond the attempts of any competitor; and, as for count Bruhl, inveigled by his soothing blandish-

blandishments, he promised himself that he should find him a steady friend, and useful instrument. But time has shewn him to be extremely disappointed in such conclusions, not knowing the man with whom he had to do.

Here, Sir, I have given you a succinct sketch of the history of count Bruhl, till the accession of his present majesty to the crown of Poland ; if you have met with any-thing new in it, if this amusement of mine has given you any entertainment, the continuance of it depends on your commands ; but, at present, my weary fingers call for some respite.

But I forgot ; how is this ! You tell me that you are a stranger to the story of the prince Leifgen *. Is it possible ! since ten or twelve years, when this story had not yet lost its novelty, have you been so little inquisitive ? And have all your visitors been insensible to that ge-

* A diminutive of Elizabeth, as Betty, in English.

general fondness of telling something new and drole? Tho' really the greatest wonder of all is, that I myself, in our intimate conversations, have not related it to you: and, I verily thought, that I did not know a story worth telling, which I had not brought on the carpet; however strange these things are, it must be so, since you assure me, that prince Lisesgen is a person you never heard of; therefore my next will give you this history in its full detail; but, at present, all I can prevail upon my fingers to do, is not to conclude, without assuring you of the perpetual and unreserved friendship, with which I shall ever be,

Sir, &c.

F——t, July 31, 1760.

L E T T E R IV.

S Carce was my former letter gone to the post-house, when I received the favour of yours of the 24th of July, wherein you acquaint me, that the siege of Dresden was raised; that there had
been

been such a report in your parts four days before ; but that you was unwilling to say anything of it, opposite accounts being come, and both with particular circumstances : These opposite reports were both true in certain respects ; the king of Prussia has raised the siege, yet still remains near Dresden ; and this naturally gave rise to contradictory accounts, which also have reached this neighbourhood.

All accounts agree, that the beautiful city of Dresden, which, no less than Leipzig, deserves to be called *the jewel of Saxony*, is almost entirely buried in its ruins, particularly the Old Town ; and this calamity the wretched inhabitants can impute to no other than their very good friends the Austrians ; though his Prussian majesty, by the many examples of the enemy at Custrin, Schweidnitz, Zittau, and even at Guhrau, and other open towns in Silesia, was incontestably warranted to set the city on fire,

yet he had no such intention, as declared in the Magdeburg gazette, and it was the walls and works only which were fired, at till the Austrians, having converted the *Cross Church* tower into a battery, then it became necessary to make use of bombs for dislodging them.

It is scarce to be conceived that the Austrian commandant could be so void of reflection, as not to foresee the calamity to which he thereby exposed the city, yet it is a supposition at which nature revolts ; and, if well-grounded, is a scandal to humanity, that he should deliberately involve the residence of his mistress's most firm ally, in such a catastrophe; yet if he was not aware of the consequences which would attend the unprecedented use he made of the *Cross Tower*, he does not deserve to carry a halberd in a company of militia.

In all who are not strangers to the sentiments of philanthropy, or the laws of war
among

mong civilized nations, the conduct of the Austrians in this war must excite detestation ; the Austrian ministry openly trampled on all the dictates of reason, and the rights of nations, violating faith and compacts, and, to the shame of our enlightened times, even recommended to the states of the Empire, to second their perfidy by a like injurious conduct; their generals seem to overlook all the humane usages of war, observed among civilized people, committing such barbarities as brand the Austrian name with perpetual infamy.

To be sure, you have by this time read all the circumstances of the recent instance of Austrian inhumanity against the miserable town of Landshut. Not to mention the general pillage in which the poor inhabitants were stript of the very cloaths on their back, such was the rage of these savages, that, without regard to religion, age, or sex, they massacred innocent unarmed persons, beg-

ging for life on their knees, and holding out crucifixes; my blood rises against such sanguinary cut-throats. I had entertained pleasing ideas of the mildness and refinements of the age I lived in, and I believe you have more than once heard me, with some degree of transport, say.
Prisca juvent alios, ego me nunc denique natum

Gratulor, hæc ætas meritis apta meis.
 but alas! innumerable transactions shew that these times may be classed with those of the Goths and Herulians.

What a frivolous excuse is it to say, that in such occasions, the soldier cannot be restrained: How! A general not keep his men within bounds, in an open defenceless place, where not an enemy is left? Were I to hear this palliative from such a despicable man himself, I should make no scruple of telling him, that he might be fit to head a band of Hottentots, or Iroquois, but had neither the head nor heart to be a general in a European nation.

Gene-

General Laudohn, in particular, seems as if he would make his court to the Empress, by his distinguished ravages and barbarities in the Prussian territories; but if this general by his deportment, and the Austrian ministry by its connivance, would have the world believe, that such desolations are acceptable to the Empress, they do not reflect what a disgrace they bring on her, in the eyes of all sensible and virtuous persons.

If such inhuman procedures are inconsistent with humanity, no less are they exploded by the common rules of policy. Do they tend to create in the Silesian a longing to return under the dominion of Austria?

One observation, which I have often occasion to make in reading history, is that a general who indulges his soldiery in carnage, and the impulses of their brutal passions, is seldom or ever known

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to die a natural death; or some striking trouble or distress overtakes him before his end; let me entreat you, should you outlive me, to have an eye on Laudohn, and observe the circumstances of his life; I never was fond of setting up for a prophet, but, here I will venture on one prediction, that the cries of so much innocent blood will rouse the punitive wrath of God, and that it will not fail, one way or other, to discharge itself on him in the present life; the mercy and justice of the supreme being will not allow me to think that such inhumanities against a quiet innocent people, will go unpunished.

If I have here exhibited only mournful scenes, be pleased to attribute it to a melancholy compassion, a resentful zeal, which, amidst such transactions, he who feels for mankind, can hardly suppress; but, now I'll make you amends, by communicating to you the story of the prince Betty, which, I promise myself,

self, will dispel all the gloomy imagery raised by the premises.

This story, in several respects, is not without instruction; among other things, it shews, that, to act the part of a prince in the world, is not a point of such great difficulty; for here you will see it done by a person without birth or education; and none of the whole nobility, for several miles round, could observe, in this impostor, any grounds for a suspicion.

In the year 1717, or 1718, when the present king of Poland, then electoral prince, in the course of his travels, came to Vienna; there lived in Wolckenstein, a little place among the Mine Mountains, in Saxony, a clothier's daughter then in her 22d. or 23d. year, whose christian-name was Elizabeth, but her sur-name I have forgot. Her condition, it seems, sat very uneasy on the girl, being obliged,
day

day after day, to work hard at the loom, besides, she had to do with none of the most indulgent fathers, that she was ever contriving how she should free herself from this insupportable bondage, and procure something more to her liking.

What she was most out of humour with was her sex, and she would frequently exclaim against providence for not making a man of her ; these dispositions, at length, produced a scheme to steal out of her father's house, and in the disguise of a man, endeavour to mend her circumstances ; a favourable juncture, for her elopement, offered, her father, at that time a widdower, being gone from home.

He had taken with him his everyday cloaths, that nothing remained for her but his suit of black, in which, to appear like a creditable burgher, he used to go to the sacrament, or funerals ;

als ; this happened to fit her, so she put on one of her father's shirts, and crammed two others in the pockets, and in this garb, recommending herself to providence, she, one night left her father's house, and her dress put her on passing for an ejected school-master.

After wandering through several parts of the country, where she picked up something among the gentry and clergy, she came at last to Augustusburg-house, where Mr. Gunther, as surveyor of the king's fisheries, resided, a great number of the king's ponds lying in that neighbourhood. This gentleman being then at home, she requested his benevolence, as an ejected school-master : the surveyor of the fishery, fancied that he saw in this ejected school-master some glimpse of the then electoral prince, now king of Poland ; and, in reality, between these two very different persons, there was a resemblance, though not very great.

Mr.

Mr. Gunther put several questions to this school-master, which Miss Betty answered with a composedness and gravity, that the surveyor of the fisheries construed to be inborn stateliness and dignity ; at length he began to surmise, that this person might be the electoral prince himself.

Before you laugh at the surveyor's simplicity, be pleased to recollect what I said in my letter of the 25th of July, about the sanguine hopes which the Saxons entertained of the then electoral prince, exulting in ideal perspectives of the blessings which were to distinguish his reign, when their burthens should be lightened, every grievance be redressed, and all things be set on a right footing ; it is impossible to conceive what stories these hopes had given rise to, particularly that the electoral prince went about the country *incognito*, the better to inform himself of the condition of his future subjects ; and thus
take

take effectual measures for their prosperity.

Particularly a report went current, that the electoral prince was not detained so long on his travels, but, without his father's privity was taking a tour all about the country, that he might see every thing with his own eyes, and that people might not suffer by false representations; indeed, few at court gave any heed to such tattle, but, the surveyor of the fisheries happened to be one of those, who, being pleased with the story, readily believed it.

Mr. Gunther, in his profound sagacity, thought that if this was the electoral prince, his business was to entertain him well, as that would certainly make his fortune; the whole story declares him to be a man of a very narrow grasp; yet, was he ambitious of making a great figure in the succeeding reign. It is a very just observation that men of slender

der parts are most fond of courts ; men of sublime sentiments, and a just way of thinking, having a better idea of happiness, than to seek for it, in those scenes of intrigue and fallacy.

However, he was for proceeding warily ; and taking the sham school-master into his parlour, after giving him a large cup of wine, he entered into talk with him on several subjects, and in every thing Miss Betty shewed an acuteness and understanding which to the surveyor seemed above the sphere of a poor school-master ; and he imagined that with his perspicacious eyes he saw a princely majesty beam forth in all her expressions and deportment ; thus he became persuaded that the person before him could be no other than the electoral prince ; in this conceit, without any further hesitation, he ventured to say to Miss Betty, that if he was not much mistaken, it was a very different person from a School-master, whom he
saw

saw in this disguise : At this, Miss Betty, whose heart went pit a pat for fear of a discovery, coloured ; but her spirit revived when the surveyor, continuing his discourse, said that tho' his apparel was none of the best, in his opinion it covered a person of the highest rank. This honour she declared did not belong to her, but it was with such confusion as only confirmed Mr. Gunther's prepossession ; in a word, her blushes with the manner of her waving any pretence to quality, left not the least doubt in him but that his guest was the electoral prince of Saxony.

The Surveyor thought himself extremely happy that heaven should put so fair an opportunity into his hands of advancing himself, and that should he let it slip, he should deserve to be posted for a fool, instead of being counted a wise man which he had always affected ; and rising up, said to him, that he was not ignorant of the noble motives
of

of his Royal Highness's going about the country in that disguise, but that he should see his ends might be sufficiently answered, if he pleased to honour his house some time with his presence, and at the same time, he made a tender, that every thing in it, was at his Royal Highness's entire disposal.

Miss Betty who had left her father's house to seek her fortune, and who wisht for nothing more than a life of ease and merriment, thought this a proposal of which it behoved her to avail herself, and at the same time was sensible that her case required prudence and caution; accordingly, she desired the surveyor to mention no such high titles to her, not but that she held herself much obliged to him for his kind offer.

Mr. Gunther replied, that since it was his Royal Highness's pleasure, he
would

would forbear titles, as his intention was to be unknown, but again repeated the offer of his house and every thing in his power; and Miss Betty at his many humble instances, consented to spend some days there, if it would not be too great a trouble; one of the chief cautions on which Miss Betty resolved in this farce, was never to say that she was the electoral prince, but by a reserv'd serious behaviour drill him on in his chimerical imaginations, and this she pleaded before the late king Frederick Augustus and the commissioner of enquiry; and the surveyor himself did her the justice to own that she had never pretended to be the prince, nor directly countenanced his suppositions of her being that royal person.

The first night this honourable person lay in Mr. Gunther's house, his joy kept him waking; nothing was more certain with him, than that it now only depended on his making a due use of this
fortunate

adventure, to be amongst the first of the ministry in the next reign; a thought which doubtless was accompanied with an ejaculation of thanksgiving; he most wisely supposed that the greater obligations he laid the prince under, the greater would be his advancement. His fortune being very considerable, he was persuaded that this was the season to sow plentifully, as sure to reap an exuberant harvest.

The next morning he proposed to the prince to change his apparel for that of a higher rank, as better answering his end of remaining unknown; for the meaner his appearance, the sooner would a keen eye see through the disguise, as dignity of carriage could not be long laid aside, so as to escape detection. This perhaps Mr. Gunther meant as a compliment to his own penetration; he added, that he thought the rank of count was the best adapted to his Royal Highness's drift, as not being attended with
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the constraint of royalty, which hindered a personal inspection into everything; nor, which would be the case of a low rank, did it exclude him from the company of the nobility and gentry; whose free sentiments he might thus hear, and judge of their manners; further, Mr. Gunther, concluding that his Royal Highness might not be provided for the expence of new dresses, he humbly requested him to make use of his money, which was entirely at his service; and this from mere respect to his Royal Highness, without any view of return or recompence, which he neither wanted or desired.

To this offer prince Betty made several objections; signifying that it, by no means, squared with his views; however at the pressing intreaties of the surveyor, he intimated to him, that he might give orders for what he thought proper. Mr. Gunther, without delay, ordered three or four very rich suits, hired

ed. four servants for the prince, and made him a present of a superb coach, with six horses, which he said ~~the~~ prince would want for visiting the several parts of the country ; and that the prince might be suitably provided with the grand requisite, he with the most reverential humility, humbly offered him a gold purse with 300 ducats, and would not desist till his Royal Highness was graciously pleased to accept of it.

Prince Betty being thus equipped for his rank of count, as this was Mr. Gunther's project, he also conferred the title which the prince was to bear ; and borrowed it, if I mistake not, from a Holstein family ; every thing being now settled, Mr. Surveyor invites all the neighbouring nobility and gentry to his house, for the entertainment of the prince, who was made known to every one under the fictitious title of count, but Mr. Gunther was not wanting privately, and with the most earnest request

quest of secrecy, to whisper to all his visitors, that his guest was no other than the Electoral Prince; such an honour they could not but esteem a sure presage of the most glorious fortune. As to this, I believe you will not much censure Mr. Gunther, it being no more than a very common inclination; most men would make little account of any riches or honours were they to enjoy them without others knowing any thing of their prosperity.

These visits of the neighbouring nobility at the surveyor's house went on for near a month; all crowded thither with a view of getting into the favour of Saxony's rising sun, and his favourite Mr. Von Gunther; thus for his money he, at least, had for some time the flattering pleasure of being surrounded by persons of rank, all courting his friendship, and he had already a forecast of the incense which probably would have been offered to him had all his suppositions been real.

On all occasions prince Betty topped her part, she did not in the least disgrace the title of count, and the reservedness which she constantly kept to, with the country nobility, passed for the stamp of royalty, which under this inferior disguise seemed, to dignify every part of her behaviour; in short there was not one who harboured the least doubt of Mr Gunther's serious whisperings; so easy are men to be imposed on, or rather so easy is it to play the part of the great ones of the world!

However, now comes on the *denouement* of this farce, some of the nobles having relations or friends at court with whom they corresponded, writ, but strictly recommending secrecy, that the electoral prince was certainly at Augustusburg *incognito*.

These courtiers, and who can blame them? thought that an information of this nature was not to be concealed from
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the king ; his majesty, who knew for certain that his son was at Vienna, or that he was strangely imposed on, would believe nothing of the matter, yet thought it proper to take so much notice of this account as to send one of the officers of his household who knew the prince too well to be mistaken; and he, as a gentleman, sent in his name to Mr. surveyor, desiring he might be permitted to kiss the count's hands; in the mean time he also had the whispering that the person who past only for a count was really the electoral prince.

This officer's visit was over on sight ; he hastened back to court and assured the king, that the Augustusburg Count had, indeed, something of the air of the electoral prince, but that he was no more the prince than he himself; hereupon the king immediately sent a party of horse with a warrant to bring prince Betty and the surveyor of the fishery to Dresden.

The king asked prince Betty who she was? she, without the least discomposure, gave him a full account of her family, sex, and all the circumstances which had occasioned her being the object of the surveyor's liberality, and the admiration of the nobles, without her ever having pretended to be the electoral prince. Not a letter of her account could be disproved, and even Gunther himself acquiesced in the truth of all she had deposed; the king however, suspecting this errantry to have been the consequence of some amours at home, had prince Betty searched by midwives, who unanimously declared her to be a pure virgin.

Hereupon, the king himself pronounced this sentence; that prince Betty, as a due punishment of the surveyor, should keep every thing that he had given her, and as it were forced on her; but, that she should be confined, during

during life; in Waldheim bridewell, tho' not put to any labour; and, that Gunther should allow her a rix dollar *per diem*, as long as she lived.

This has been fulfilled in every article: as for prince Betty, several of my acquaintance have seen her at Waldheim, and talked with her; she had her own clean room in the house, boarded with the keeper, and generally wore a genteel kind of amazon habit; she was ever sprightly, merry, and saying, her life was a heaven, to that she led at home, under her morose father, and slaving like a common hireling: however, I fancy that his majesty's sentence occasioned many reflections, but the sheet is full, and scarce leaves me room to assure you of the eternal friendship with which I am,

SIR, &c.

F——t, August 2, 1760

L E T T E R V.

Dear Sir,

I Am favoured with your's of the first instant, in which you lay your commands on me to go on with Count Bruhl's life; and, in this you are so peremptory, that I may keep my meditations on the occurrences of the world to myself, till I have put the finishing hand to that narrative; you urge, that, as I profess only to write to please you, there resides an indisputable right in to appoint what I shall write.

With submission, not so indisputable, some weighty objections lay against it: by a parity of reason, the men have an indisputable right of regulating the modes of the fair sex; for that they dress only to please us, is manifest; most heartily do I wish you could make this argument prevail every where, I would collect

collect all the votes of the men in this country, that those ridiculous *carcasses* which disguise so many charming faces, and certainly were the spiteful invention of some homely piece envious of beauty, should be sentenced to die, that is, to be looked on as old fashioned.

However, you have another, more indisputable right of dictating what I shall write, I mean our long and sincere friendship; and to shew you the readiness of my obedience, I'll buckle to, without any farther cavil or preamble.

I have brought my delineation of count Bruhl, to the accession of his present majesty to the crown of Poland; I have shewn you by what means he kept his footing under the present government, his interest not having suffered the least diminution, or rather by the artful exchange he made of his employment with the then supreme favourite, he acquired a greater in-

fluence on affairs; they who had but a superficial knowledge of the court, imagined that count Sulkowsky, and count Bruhl, had agreed to share the king's favour; but with them who knew the inside of the court, it was no secret, that the scale of the king's favour very much preponderated towards Sulkowsky.

This was most evidently seen in the disposal of all considerable employments; if, on a vacancy, count Sulkowsky gave his promise, it might be depended on as done; whereas count Bruhl, after assuring his very best friends of some posts, that fell vacant, often was obliged to excuse himself to them.

Not a month before the fall of count Sulkowsky, Bruhl was thoroughly sensible that he had the upper hand of him in the king's favour; for, about
that

that time, a handsome post in the king's gardens falling, count Bruhl had promised it to count B——, but hearing that Mr. M——, who stood very well with count Sulkowsky, put in for it, he sent for Mr. M——, and told him, that he knew he would get the post by count Sulkowsky's recommendation; but, that he desired he would trust to his generosity, and drop his solicitations for the place; that, not knowing any thing of his intentions, he had promised it to count B——, otherwise, he had such an esteem for him, that no person living should have got a promise from him to his prejudice; but, if he would be so kind as to give him an opportunity of fulfilling his promise, he might rest assured, that he would take care he should be no loser, and soon return it by something much better.

Mr. ——— made no difficulty of complying, but count Sulkowsky did not much relish such an obsequiousness to count Bruhl; on count Sulkowsky's fall, which as I said followed within a month, Mr. ——— said to one of his intimates, that now he hugged himself for having yielded to count Bruhl's pleasure; so you may, answer'd his friend, when count Bruhl has given you proofs that he has that generosity on which he desired you to depend; but this never was the case; for count Bruhl after keeping Mr. ——— in a long attendance turned him adrift only with a barren title.

If it be certain that count Sulkowsky had a greater sway over the king than count Bruhl, it would have been no difficult matter for him, had he been so inclined, to have given count Bruhl a foil; and that he did not, shews an uncommon generosity in count Sulkowsky, especially as he soon perceived that count
Bruhl

Bruhl was very far from the attachment he had vowed to him, openly traversing him in many occurrences, besides his secret machinations to undermine him, which were not unknown to count Sulkowsky ; but, conceiving his predominance in the king's, heart to be immoveable, he suffered count Bruhl quietly to hold all his employments.

Some days indeed before his fall, count Sulkowsky mov'd the king to dismiss count Bruhl from his service, as a person offensive to all good subjects ; this is no more than was well known to all acquainted with the secret transactions of the court at that time ; but if count Sulkowsky did so, it was not till he had the most unquestionable informations that count Bruhl was working his ruin.

Here, Sir, I conclude you are for knowing by what expedients count Bruhl, I would not say, elbow'd count Sulkowsky out of the king's favour, for that

I believe he never lost, but deprived him of his posts; the mines which count Bruhl sprung on this occasion are these.

His Polish majesty, has the best heart in the world; such a heart as providence, were it not for the punishment of nations and other wise ends, would never have placed on a throne; hearts of this cast being always abused, to the misery of a people, by corrupt and flagitious men who are continually obsequing the sovereign; from this very goodness of heart it is that his Polish majesty, besides an unlimited confidence in his two chief ministers, is filled with the most implicit devotedness to his consort the queen; a devotedness, which women of understanding easily secure, when they have a fond husband to work on.

It was one of count Bruhl's chief artifices to have his secret spies about the king and queen, and even about
count

count Sulkowsky ; these watched every minute circumstance, and made particular reports, that her majesty was not thoroughly pleased with count Sulkowsky, as on some occasions, this minister gave it for his opinion that a compliance with the queen's pleasure would be of ill consequence. Count Bruhl was too vigilant not to see, that this displeasure of the queen against count Sulkowsky, however now only light and desultory, might, by the agency of a dexterous instrument, become an opportunity of overthrowing his benefactor.

His first step was previously to increase the queen's indignation against count Sulkowsky ; when he knew that the count was unavoidably obliged to take one particular measure, he had his engines for instilling opposite ideas into the queen, and working her up to a vehement resolution of carrying her point.

And

And here my friend I could specify to you some very artful practices of such finesse as might be reckon'd master-pieces of court craft, only they would detain me too long from the main narrative, but when that is gone through, remind me of these artifices and you shall have them in a proper light.

At the same time he entered into, an intimacy with the queen's confessor, father Guarini, who had an absolute power over the queen's mind. The bait for catching a jesuit; count Bruhl well knew was the power of the order and the extension of the Roman Catholic religion; he accordingly represented to father Guarini, that by making use of his power over the queens mind to supplant count Sulkowsky, the insolent opposer of her schemes being removed, his omnipotency with the queen would in effect put into his hands the controul of of all affairs both in Poland and Saxony; at the same time, he promised, that not only

only he himself would turn papist, but by all means possible he would promote the catholic interest in Saxony, as far as it could be done consistent with the tranquillity of the empire.

In these clandestine negotiations was the fall of count Sulkowsky resolved on, and the queen set about alienating her consort from his favourite. It is a mistake to think that the jesuits are in a perfect agreement among themselves, being men like ourselves, the very same hatred, envy, and every malignant passion prevail among them; and whatever unity may appear, when the interest of their society is to be supported against a foreign enemy, this is not owing to their postponing private views and passions to the good of the society, but the real cause is the despotic government under which they are; as a single letter from the general can at once destroy the whole fortune of any single jesuit; thus through fear they are oblig-

ed

ed apparently to let the advantages of their order take the lead of their private passions.

Accordingly, count Sulkowsky has been known to tell several of his friends, that another jesuit, namely, the kings father confessor continually advised him of what was carrying on against him; and he now saw the weakness of giving credit to count Bruhl's protestations; and, eager to repair his error he left no stone unturned for getting count Bruhl removed from court; but it was now too late, and of these very endeavours the queen made a handle to irritate her consort against him, and so peremptory were her remonstrances that the king found himself obliged to dismiss count Sulkowsky; and he was stript of all his employments except the generalship.

However, it appeared on several occasions afterwards that the king was rather deprived of count Sulkowsky,
than

than the latter had lost the royal favour; good tempers, against their own inclinations, and views, are often seen, for the sake of peace and quietness, to suffer themselves to be led to any thing; and to this was owing the disgrace of count Sulkowsky. It must be own'd that the removal of this minister caused some joy all over Saxony, but that these exultations were premature, the subsequent times must have sufficiently convinced the giddy Saxons; it is the universal fate of favourites to be hated by the people, at least, in all my travels, I have not met with one exception; and this hatred extends so far that even they who have partook of his favours or feel the sweets of being employed as his instruments, execrate him in their hearts.

Another objection most popular, I don't say well grounded, against count Sulkowsky, was his not being a Saxon.

Count Sulkowsky, indeed, cannot be
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accused of any neglect of himself, having, in the short course of his ministry, which was not quite two years, put at least, two millions in his pocket; yet, compared with count Bruhl, he must appear a minister of great probity and disinterestedness; besides, in him there appeared a manifest possibility of his raising such a large fortune, without fleecing the country; the annual amount of all his employments being little short of one hundred thousand dollars, and he living at the rate only of four thousand.

In the year 1736, I was several times at his house, and all his servants, of both sexes, did not exceed ten, and, of these, only four in livery; if to these vast savings be added, the presents for the various posts and starosties, which became vacant, from time to time; for, if the king of Poland is sworn not to accept of any presents on that account, his ministers take no such oath; it is plain

plain that Saxony contributed very little to count Sulkowsky's wealth; but, count Bruhl would make a wretched figure, were he thus to disclose the sources which furnish means for such enormous dissipations, and, at the same time, such immense accumulations.

The fall of count Sulkowsky drew after it the deplorable end of colonel Schmiskal; for the favourites of princes are never without their favourites, and such was Mr. Schmiskal of count Sulkowsky; while he was a gentleman of the bed-chamber, and captain, Mr. Schmiskal was lieutenant of his company, and extremely countenanced by his captain; in consequence of which, as count Sulkowsky, with unexampled celerity, rose from captain to general of the foot; he took care that Mr. Schmiskal's fortune should keep pace with his, that, from a Lieutenant, he soon saw himself a colonel.

On

On count Sulkowsky's being removed from court, count Bruhl procured a warrant from the king to put this colonel under an arrest; and, he being probably of a melancholy temper, and giving over himself and his patron for lost, sunk into despair, and shot himself. Mr. Schmiskal also, was not free from the *amor sceleratus habendi*; for, when a lieutenant, he was not worth a ducat, and, by his powerful recommendations to count Sulkowsky, at the time of his suicide, was master of above 50,000 dollars; and in some other articles he cannot be exculpated; but, it was with a very ill grace that count Bruhl could bear so very hard on such failures, when all poor Schmiskal's guilt, collectively, was but a mole hill, in comparison of what had been committed by himself, his private secretaries, and favourites.

Perhaps count Bruhl's behaviour, in several particulars here related, will appear

pear to have been far from praise worthy : I am intirely of your mind ; several personal affronts were put on count Sulkowsky, and such insolence was so far from being chastised, that it was matter of laughter to count Bruhl. Among other insults, one of the king's foresters in Lusatia, thinking, thereby to curry favour with count Bruhl, shot a pretty favourite dog of count Sulkowsky, as it was running by his coach.

Thus it was that count Bruhl dispossessed his rival of the king's favour; and removed the grand obstacle to his engrossing the arbitrary rule over Saxony and Poland. It now remained to fulfil the articles, in consideration of which, father Guarini had performed this meritorious good office for him, as otherwise he might well expect the same fate as count Sulkowsky; accordingly he changed his religion, and became a Roman Catholic, tho' this was to be kept private; as by the religious

ligious capitulation of Frederic Augustus, he had now forfeited all his employments; for, though this was no secret among the chief courtiers, yet, in public, this new convert, always made shew of being a Lutheran, and, in all solemnities, never joined in the ceremonies of popery.

But, at present, all the world is welcome to know of this apostacy; his family goes openly to mass; and, at Warsaw, he is a thorough catholic, as, otherwise, he could not hold his posts and starosties in Poland; as to the States of Saxony, he is secure of them, that they will never have the resolution to stand up for the religious capitulation, and insist on his resigning those employments which are connected with the electorate.

He also found there was no eluding the other preliminary stipulated with Guarini, which was to allow him a share
in

in the administration; accordingly, not a day passed, but count Bruhl and the jesuit had a *tete a tete*. Punctually at four o'clock in the afternoon; this religious never failed going to count Bruhl, on which the gates were shut, whilst this junto decided the welfare of Saxony and Poland, and the fate of two millions of Protestants. This privy council, as it might well be called, lasted till between six and seven, when the gates were again opened: These mysterious deliberations must have been of an extreme importance and urgency, not suffering the intermission of a single day, not even tho' the court was at Leipfick fair; but as the Jesuits never appear there in their ecclesiastical habit, father Guarini generally wore light grey trim'd with black, and a bob wig without a foretop; and, in this garb, I have seen him going to, and coming from his brother in iniquity a hundred times.

But

The queen, I suppose, was brought to believe, that she had the decisive vote in this council, and that her will was the rule of their proceedings ; and, if this kind of government had been to her liking, she would have rivetted count Bruhl more and more in her husband's favour. This doubtless was count Bruhl's chief scope. Soon after the death of father Guarini, who, minister-like, making the most of his employments, left vast sums behind him : I had occasion to make a second journey to Dresden, where two courtiers of the first magnitude assured me, that the count, by his irresistible address, had worm'd her majesty out of all share of the government, and that it must be some trivial concern where her voice was attended to, yet has she never shewn one mark of resentment against the count. By what forcery the minister could bring these revolutions to pass, is utterly unknown.

Lastly,

Lastly, it was very easy for the queen to see that count Bruhl meant nothing but ingratitude, making use of her interest and authority only for his own ends. An acquaintance of mine, in the court of Saxony, affirmed to me, so long as eight months ago, that her majesty, in the last years of her life, had made several attempts to overthrow count Bruhl, and punish his ungrateful duplicity; but all her projects and endeavours proved abortive; such a prevalence had this minister obtained over his sovereign's heart, as to counterballance the sway of a strong conjugal affection.

By these steps count Bruhl rose to his predominancy in the royal favour, and ever since, which is now the space of near 20 years, all Saxony has been at his beck; he appears to have looked on this groaning country as an estate, as his property, as if created only to supply his profaneness and avarice.

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A glaring

A glaring evidence that he makes use of Saxony only for these oppressive ends, and that it is he who is lord paramount there, leaving his master only an empty title, is, that he has openly declared himself prime minister, and formally taken that appellation upon himself. With the least gratitude to his Polish majesty, or regard to the honour of his sovereign, he would not have affected to take this step in the eyes of the whole court.

I have in several countries seen ministers of unbounded power, who engrossed the hearts of their sovereigns, and who in effect, were prime ministers; all affairs whatever being determined by their good pleasure; yet they were masters of so much discretion, and retained so much regard for their sovereign's honour, that they avoided being publicly declared prime ministers, or assuming the title.

In

In the judgment of this age, and never was the nature of government, the connection of affairs, and the duty of rulers better understood, a prince, who governs himself, has no need of a prime minister ; for a favourite to desire his sovereign to declare him prime minister, is no less than to desire him to make a public acknowledgment, that he himself does not govern ; and whether the cause be indolence or want of capacity such an acknowledgment does him little honour with men of sense.

If cardinal Richlieu was publicly declar'd prime minister to Lewis XIII. this was at a time, when the world was not so generally acquainted with sound politics as at present ; the cardinals Mazarine and Fleury also filled that post under Lewis XIV. and XV. but this was in the minority of those princes, or at least when their unexperienced age required a prime minister ; and when those two cardinals died, their respective sove-

reigns declared that they would name no other prime ministers, but for the future they themselves would govern, *and that a king who had a prime minister would never be accounted to govern of himself.*

So little congruity is there between the post of prime minister and the nature and end of good government, it favours so strongly of Asiatic despotism that one would think a man of sense could hardly be prevailed on to accept of such an odious appellation; it ever gives offence to his fellow subjects; grand *viziers* * suiting only a despotic prince and servile nation.

I know I shall please you in reminding you of a passage on this head in the *Spirit of Laws*; as I write for your entertainment I shall transcribe it, though

* The original signification of this word is porter or carrier of burthens.

possibly you may not subscribe to the passage in all its amplitude, it is this,

“ From the nature of despotic government it follows, that it being
 “ lodged in a single person, he also must
 “ delegate it to one person ; he to whom
 “ his five senses are continually telling,
 “ that he is all and the others nothing,
 “ will naturally be indolent, ignorant,
 “ and voluptuous, of course will not
 “ trouble himself with the burthen of
 “ government ; and if committed to
 “ several, there would be continual divisions
 “ among them, forming parties
 “ who should be the chief slave ; and
 “ this would lay the sovereign under
 “ a necessity of resuming the government
 “ into his own hands : Thus is it
 “ most natural to commit it to a vizier
 “ invested with his own power ; in these
 “ states, one of the fundamental maxims
 “ is, that there be a vizier ; and we are
 “ told by Sir John Chardin, that there

“ is not an eastern prince who has not
 “ his vizier.

“ It is related of a certain pope, that
 “ being conscious of his want of talents,
 “ it was with extreme difficulty he was
 “ brought to acquiesce in the election ;
 “ and the affairs of the government he
 “ intrusted to the management of his
 “ nephews ; but not long after, he said
 “ with great astonishment, *well, I could*
 “ *never have imagined it was so easy a*
 “ *thing to be pope ;* this is the case of the
 “ eastern monarchs, when after being
 “ long kept in a confinement where
 “ their hearts and minds are vitiated by
 “ eunuchs, and they sometimes kept ig-
 “ norant of their rank, they are brought
 “ forth to fill the throne, they become
 “ overwhelmed with amazement ; but
 “ after nominating a vizier and for a
 “ while giving themselves up to the
 “ most beastly passions ; these also could
 “ never have thought it was so easy to
 “ be a sultan.”

Do you think, that a statesman, after reading this passage, will be very fond of being declared prime minister? no, certainly his good sense and regard for his master's honour, if he has any, will not allow him to think of it, and what can be thought of a minister in a civilized nation, who has not cast an eye into a book, of all others most necessary to him; and the excellences of which will be admired whilst sense and virtue are of any esteem in the world.

There is not a circumstance in which count Bruhl does not shew that he has much of the grand vizier in him; I can hardly think that ever any one grand vizier of the Ottoman empire has spent and amassed so much; and if such a one could be found, let it be considered that Saxony to those vast dominions is little more than one to a hundred: In one of my succeeding letters I shall set forth count Bruhl's administration with regard to Saxony, and as to the intrigues

of the viziers in the seraglio for maintaining their power and keeping at a distance whatever might tend to give the fultan an insight into their management, I don't see how any vizier at Constantinople or Agra can have gone beyond count Bruhl.

You must know that in chusing the officers who are about the king's person, he uses the utmost circumspection, these are posts which he takes care none shall be admitted to, who are not totally devoted to his interest, and whom he has not tried; these in their several stations preclude any suspicious person from having access to his majesty, no person can so much as pay their proper respects to the king without acquainting the minister of it and obtaining his consent; but to speak to the king in private, that is not to be thought of, the highest officers civil or military in Saxony must not expect it, though these, to a man, are the minister's creatures.

A nobleman, a privy counsellor in a foreign court, being once at Dresden on a party of pleasure, was for paying his respects to the king of Poland; altho' count Bruhl, after his usual manner, assured the nobleman, with many compliments, that it would be very acceptable to his majesty, yet he spent six weeks to no purpose, though he never missed being at court three or four times every week; at last, being out of patience, he freely said to the lord of the bed-chamber, that he had not imagined there was any presumption or impropriety in his desire of paying his respects to his majesty, and as little could he think that the king secluded himself from all human society, or that they who had the honour of being about his majesty were for keeping him invisible in a kind of forced confinement; withal, that he did not understand these frequent refusals. This freedom proved so effectual, that the very next day word was brought to him, that the king would be glad to

see him ; but even here the above mentioned caution was used, the lord of the bed-chamber taking care to be within hearing all the time ; this I had from the nobleman's own mouth.

But what is this to the circumspection when his majesty is going abroad, or to chappel ; lest some ill intention'd person might accost his majesty, or a memorial striking at the minister be put into his hand, when his majesty is on moving, the pages keep a sharp look out ; and if they see any one they don't like, he must immediately depart, or be tumbled down stairs by the guards ; this I have several times been a witness of.

It is the general wonder in foreign countries, that his Polish majesty does not see into his minister's mismanagement, and the evils this man brings on the country, and consequently what disgrace on himself ; but those who are acquainted with the affairs of Saxony,
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and count Bruhl's great precautions make no wonder of it. There is scarce a possibility that any-thing should reach the king by which the minister should be hurt; all who are near his person are the minister's creatures, who are continually crying up to him the wisdom, penetration, and probity of count Bruhl, his zeal for his majesty's honour, and the happiness of the country under his administration; thus situated, how should the king open his eyes? But how detestable is a minister, who, for his own fordid ends, but to the inexpressible detriment of the country, thus blindfolds his sovereign, and of his attendants makes so many spies and informers. I suppose it was pretty much in count Bruhl's way, that the *Maires du Palais* in France let out and carried their arbitrariness to such a height, that they would not allow the king to be seen by the people above once a year, and then in a chariot drawn by oxen.

I am

I am much more inclined to pity sovereigns than to censure them; the frauds for deceiving them are so finely spun, and so various in their texture, that to discern and counter-act them requires a consummate prudence. The only security that I know of against such deceptions is a perpetual mistrust; a very uneasy resource, indeed, yet I cannot help thinking, that confidence and friendship are not the qualities of a very wise ruler: As for the pleasures which they lose by this preventive, would not their condition be too happy if it were susceptible of all the felicities of private life? Who was ever known to enjoy a compleat happiness in this world?

But, to the great misfortune of the subject, it is seldom or never that princes have an opportunity of learning this diffidence; they to whom the education is committed generally teach them quite different maxims, that they themselves may hereafter make their advantage of their
sovereign

sovereign's confidence ; and such is the depravity of man, that not seldom their understanding wants its due culture, purely that they may be more ductile and communicative. The case is the same here as with liberality ; a sovereign should not be of all things openhanded, as properly having nothing of his own, being only the steward of his people ; whereas liberality is one of the very first principles recommended to a young prince ; and wherefore ? But because those about him expect that the prince's liberality will turn to good account with them.

Such are the arts by which count Bruhl continues to preserve himself in the royal favour : indeed, I believe that very few attempts will be made to dislodge him ; for, as every one seems persuaded that it is impossible ; who will venture, on an uncertainty, to sacrifice his interest to the good of the public. If any attempts of this nature have been made,
it

it is probable that the chief author of them was count Warckchenbarth, lord steward to the electoral prince; nobody is more displeased with count Bruhl's administration, nor less inclined to flatter the prime minister, or court his favour, than this nobleman; who, besides his other eminent merits, is a person of much more learning than is seen among the great world. He makes no difficulty of openly declaring his discontent; even to me, the very first time I waited on him, he gave no obscure intimation what his thoughts were of the prime minister: perhaps it may be owing to this unreservedness, that he has not been able to effect any-thing; From this motive he has several times been on the point of laying down all his employments, and actually did, and left the court; but the great affection of the electoral prince for him, drew him thither again. Some persons of rank would have persuaded me, that the electoral prince's once essay'd to open the
king's

king's eyes, with regard to count Bruhl's mal-administration; but, a thousand instances shew, that the successor is very seldom able to do any considerable hurt to the favourite of the sovereign on the throne. The plausible paralogisms which ministers have always at hand, for their apology, and especially here, are such as easily make a favourable impression on indolent sovereigns.

The time of this essay is said to have been soon after the marriage of the electoral prince; yet, I was assured, above six years ago, that there was a total change of tempers and circumstances; count Bruhl having so ingratiated himself at the court of the electoral princess, that a demise would cause no alteration in his fortune. Thus count Bruhl seems to possess, in the highest degree, that magic, which the countess of Ancre owned in a public court of judicature; saying, That she had governed the queen of France by magic, but,
it

it was that, by which superior minds rule the weak. But, with regard to Bruhl, I think the comparison will run better, if we say, that magic, by which fraudulent minds seduce the well-meaning.

It is now high time to conclude for the present, which I do, with the customary, yet, sincere assurance, that I am,

Sir, &c.

F——t, August 4, 1760.

L E T T E R VI.

SIR,

Without any introductory compliments, I proceed in the narrative you desired.

King Philip IV. of Spain, supinely gave himself up to be guided in all things

things by the duke of Lerma ; till, one day, sitting down at table, he found under his plate a note, with this inscription, *To Don Philip, once king of Spain and the Indies ; at present in the service of the Duke of Lerma.* This poignant address made an impression where the most solid and pathetic representations had failed : and soon after fell the mighty duke of Lerma.

The writer of this note did not express himself improperly, for, if we enter into the reality of things, and do not take up with bare appellations, the minister, who arbitrarily governs the prince and his dominions, is, in effect, the real sovereign and ruler ; and, as for the king, he seems only a friend of this real Sovereign, who allows him to spend his income in indolence and pleasure.

That the *ministriſſimus* is the actual ruler, appears from the concurring testimony of historians and political writers ;

ters; how often do we meet with these expressions? *under the administration of cardinal Richlieu; under the administration of cardinal Mazarine*; accordingly, in this letter, I shall entertain my friend with the administration of his excellency count Bruhl.

When a king, commits the government to his minister, and thus, as it were, betakes himself to his rest, the whole constitution of the government becomes altered. This regent-minister, for to such an inverted state of things, a contradictory term is most adapted; this regent-minister, I say, takes upon him what no human ability is equal to: A prince, of the most comprehensive wisdom, finds it a sufficient employment to maintain the connection of interests, and to enter only into a general view of all concerns, according to the proper duty of a ruler; but, the regent-minister, besides this vast burthen, pretends also to discharge the several

veral functions of minister, to penetrate into every circumstance of occurrences, foresee events, obviate difficulties, in every exigency strike out suitable measures, and superintend the execution of them, with numberless other arduous points of government.

Were such a regent-minister the wisest man living on the face of the earth, had he the understanding of an angel, and a foresight of unmeasurable compass, yet, herein he takes upon himself a burthen too heavy for his shoulders; now, it being the sure sign of a narrow genius to undertake things beyond its ability; and, as true wisdom is very seldom to be met with in those who are pushing their fortunes at court, and ever bustling in the pursuit of such a difficult station, so the upshot is always found to be, that the minister regent, after grasping at the sole direction of all affairs, finds himself not able to execute half.

And

And, what is the consequence of this insufficiency? That he must delegate a part to his secretary, or some other under-strappers, who thus become the ministers of the regent-minister; and, he being, in effect, the real sovereign, so his secretary is the real minister of state, whilst the other titular ministers of the court, are mere cyphers, kept, as it were, for show, no business of any consequence coming before them.

This is the change which the government of every state undergoes on the creation of a regent minister; and, it is evident how pernicious such a change must be. Should we suppose the state of the world to be so very deplorable, that every one, without exception, is for enriching himself as opportunities offer; and, that the titular ministers are not less rapacious than the secretaries to the *ministrissimus*; yet, is it certain, that glory and reputation, are very
power.

powerful incentives with ministers, to act for the good of their country, and disdain any notorious bribery and corruption. But, to these motives the secretaries are utterly insensible; as every thing which they do or propose for the good of their country, is made a merit of to the minister, and placed to his account, they are intent only on spending and hoarding; and the *ministerrissimus* being obliged, as we have shewn, to rely on them, the concerns of the state are in very bad hands.

This, as it is no more than the natural consequence of things, has been the case under count Bruhl's administration. Incapable of going through such a variety of business, some was to be intrusted to his secretaries, who are, in effect ministers of the regent-minister; that, in Saxony, whether an inferior minister, or the chief commissioner of a board, the present consistorial president excepted, be ones
friend

friend or foe, is of very little signification; whereas the countenance or opposition of count Bruhl's secretaries, turns the scale; on them depend grants or denials. However unjust or difficult a case may be, yet, he who, with a brace of hundred ducats, has opened to himself one of these channels, may be assured of carrying every thing before him.

All this tribe consider, is their own interest, and of this I am going to give you a singular instance; the magistracy of all dyet towns in Saxony have a right of filling up any vacancy in the colleges, by a majority of votes in a free election; this right is one of the most essential privileges of the Saxon towns, and at the commencement of a new regency it receives the most solemn confirmation.

Yet would I venture on a considerable wager, that there is not a single corporation in all Saxony which has not
their

their burgo-masters and other members of their magistracy obtruded on them, by recommendations and sometimes by direct injunctions from the court; and on enquiry by what means these obtruded members came to be so favoured by the court, there is always found at the bottom some secretary or inferior tool of the *ministrissimus*; this you will say must bring plenty of grist to the secretary's mill; I could name you eight or ten of count Bruhl's ministers and favourites who have scraped together some half, some a whole tun of gold, and some even more. There was Hennick, private secretary to count Bruhl, or rather prime minister to the regent minister, purchased an estate of fifty thousand dollars in Upper Lusatia, and laid out as much in a house and such rich furniture, as, though a count was above his rank; besides a vast quantity of specie, as he himself had the weakness to boast.

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Don't imagine these to be fruits of parsimony; for, in profusion he egregiously aped his master, he had four footmen in gold laced liveries, and in all manner of expences, eclipsed many counts of antient families.

The cream of the jest was that once this petty prime minister and his master had a falling out, but whether his high and noble excellency the grand prime minister first became displeased with his private secretary, or whether this petty prime minister first grew out of humour with his sovereign is not publicly known, but this much is certain, that the secretary carried it something too cavalierly towards his master.

On this rupture the minister regent sent him word that he might look out for any employment in the country that he would; to which he answered, that it behoved the count to give him an employment, and
that

that he himself would see whether it suited him; at least count Hennick has boasted in a house where I am very intimate, that he sent such an answer, withal giving the company to understand, that if he was ill used he could blab; the grounds of his petulance would have been no mystery, if he had not said a word about it.

Mr. Globig, who, afterwards, for several years, discharged the functions of private secretary, must have shewn more discretion, the regent minister having married him to his brother's daughter, and raised him to the dignity of consistorial president. However, these metamorphoses are always symptoms of a distempered state; they are the characteristics of an irregular and despotic government. If Mr. Globig was before a judge and counsellor of state, it was, at the same time, known to the world, that, in effect, with regard to actual business, he was

no more than a secretary to count Bruhl.

Amazing as such promotions are, they are so frequent, that the enumeration of them all, would, alone, fill this sheet. His excellency's running-footman was appointed secretary to the ordnance at Dresden, an employment of fifteen hundred dollars *per annum*, in order to make this fellow, in some respects, a match for the daughter of the chief surveyor of the mills, one of the greatest fortunes in that city. A clerk of the kitchen, fell into disgrace from the pique of an under secretary, and, besides, had been but a short time in the family, the count dismissed him; and, as a punishment of his misbehaviour, made him only general inspector of the excise at Dresden, as in comparison of the provision made for other officers of the household, this post was, indeed, a punishment; the produce of it being only 6 or 8 hundred dollars a year.

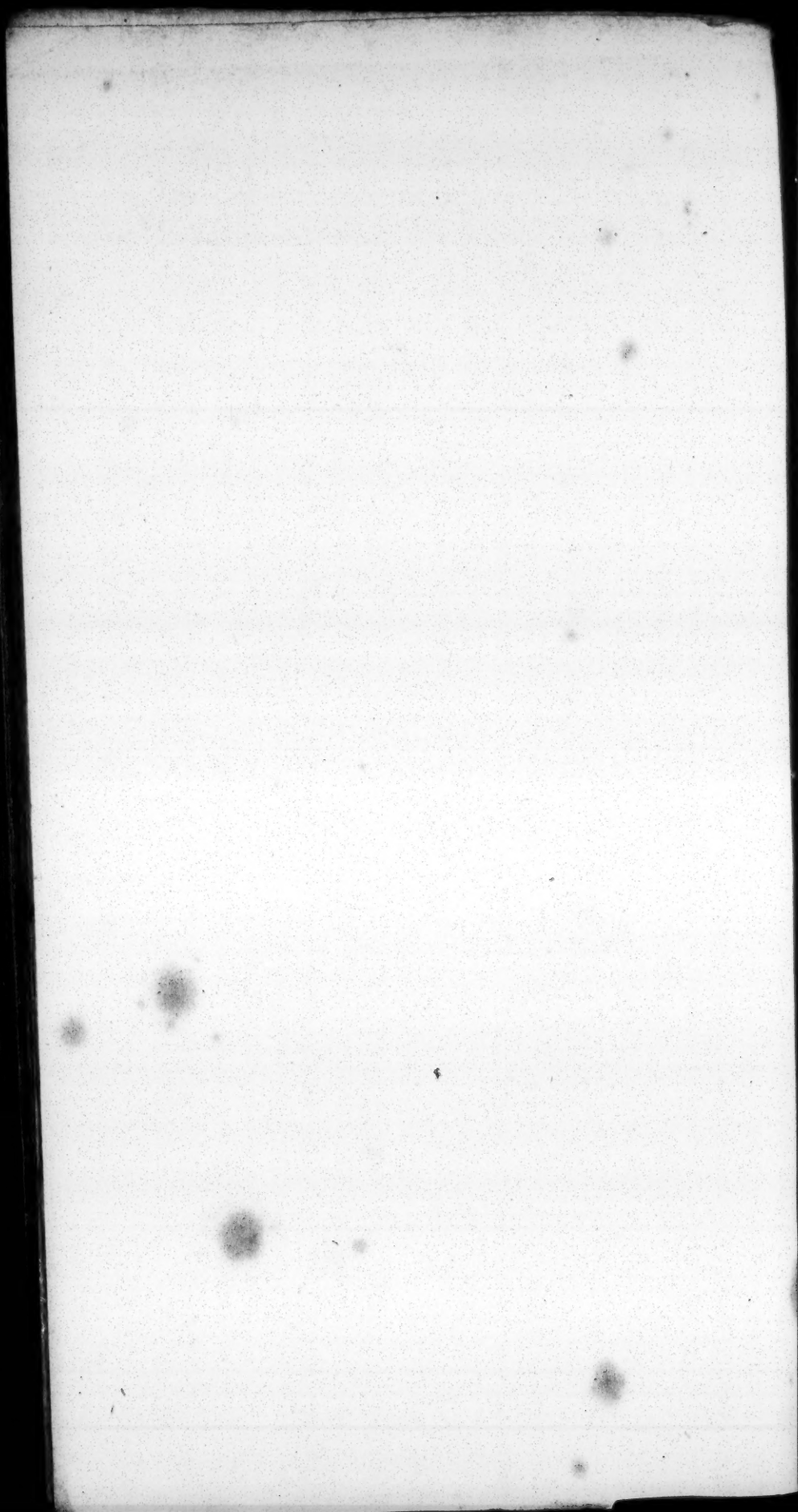
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It is a standing maxim with his excellency to settle some lucrative employment on every officer before he parts with him; a common lacquey, after wearing his livery some years, is entitled to ask an emolumentous office; and the number of the count's domestics, in or out of livery, is such, that the best employments in the country are filled from that seminary of placemen; whilst the inferior posts are the portion of the domestics of his excellency's brothers, and the lowest are distributed among the servants of other relations, and creatures of this monopolizing family.

From this, and the whole tenour of this minister's conduct, one would think him almost possessed with a notion, that the state of Saxony rested intirely on his family; and that all the lands and revenues were intended only for the aggrandizement of his relations and domestics: Had he not been infatuated with

such ideas, some proper reflections must have intervened; he would have shewn some regard for the esteem of the world; whereas all his actions shew, as clear as the sun at noon-day, that the opinion of mankind has never given him the least concern.

Count Bruhl's service, you must think, is of course very much courted; and, I can assure you, that there is not so much solicitation for a service in the royal family; it has not been known, that a man who could get the king's or the count's livery, ever preferred the former. In the king's livery, when age comes on, all that can be expected, is a pension of half the wages; whereas, he who once gets within the count's livery, may safely promise himself some comfortable employment, tho' it should not be his good fortune to be particularly liked by his lord or lady; and, if there is an instance or two of a domestic being cashiered without any pro-



the cellar: with all the train of various denominations found in the most splendid court; in the kitchen are head cooks, 12 inferior, with scullions to the number of about 30; to the cellar and confectionary belong very near a much like number; and as for the servants in livery they exceed a hundred.

If count Bruhl has no gentlemen of the bedchamber, yet is he not without a particular class of officers of state, all gentlemen by birth, who lead her ladyship and perform other honours of the house; these have handsome salaries, and are better provided for than the gentlemen of the bed-chamber, either to the prince or king.

Now after a moderate computation of this exorbitant splendor, and taking into account the vast richness of the furniture of his several houses, which exceeds all imagination, together with his overgrown library, his museum, and

and gallery of paintings; be pleased to weigh whether all this can possibly be defrayed with a million a year. I am sure I would not contract to supply the minister's expence for that sum; yet, amidst all such prodigious dissipations, to heap up as prodigious a stock of wealth; this is an art, which, since courts have existed, no man was ever known to be possessed of; and which for the honour of human nature, it is hoped will die with his excellency.

At the time when I saw with my own eyes, and not without concern, this oppressive dissipation, the imminent failure of the exchequer was but too well known to count Bruhl; for, before I left Dresden, the whole affair broke out; yet, will you believe it, though by the discontinuance of paying the interests of the government's securities, multitudes of worthy persons, widows, and orphans, whose whole fortunes were in those funds, became reduced to the most
de-

deplorable indigence and distress; not the least diminution was seen in the count's ostentation.

What is still more, and not to be thought of without indignation, in order to support such unreasonable magnificence, and in some measure patch up the credit of the steuer, all the courts of judicature in Saxony were ordered to remit to the steuer treasury what monies had been deposited there, and accept of bills in lieu: thus monies advanced on the public faith and credit, the substance of orphans and minors, which all good governments hold inviolable, was made a spoil of; these steuer bills soon losing all their little value. It was talk'd that a like order had been sent to all churches and charitable foundations, to deliver up their capitals, and even the very altars would not be spared; but, if any such thing was really intended, I am inclined to think it was never carried into execution; the church having ever
been

been found an edged tool. Really I shudder to think that there should be such a miscreant existing, who had rather cast his fellow creatures, of the same nature with himself, into the most deplorable wretchedness, and as it were, wrench the bread out of their mouths, than curtail his monstrous luxury ; this is a tyranny and inhumanity not to be exceeded.

I make no doubt but my friend has read the pamphlet which came out some years ago, in vindication of Saxony and count Bruhl, under the title of *Ephraim justified* ; it affects in a turgid style, not without art to prove the ridiculous position that the prodigality of the court, and consequently that of count Bruhl, is advantageous to Saxony ; as encouraging trade, employing artificers, and causing circulation of money.

If there be any truth in this assertion, it is on this supposition, that all the subjects are at their ease, and taxes very
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moderate; for he must have strange ideas of the welfare of nations, to maintain that the prodigality of the court promotes trade, when, at the same time, the taxes are so high that half the subjects are starving, artificers fly the country, and trades people shut up shop. But allowing this position to be true in its most extensive sense, yet, certainly the traders in Saxony are little beholden to count Bruhl's dissipations; his shoes come from Paris, 100 pair at once, and his wiggs by dozens; and even his tarts used to be sent post from the same city, *that mother of the abominations of the earth.* Dresden and Leipzig make very good chocolate, but that for his excellency must come from Rome or Vienna; in short, I scarce saw any thing in his house which was either the product or manufacture of Saxony.

It will perhaps be said, that amidst such various expenditures, many things there must be, which cannot be had from
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foreign countries ; be it so, but count Bruhl's custom is so managed, that the artificers and tradeing part of Saxony are never the better for it.

Tradefmen and artificers must stay some years before they presume to bring in their bills ; and they should not expect to be cleared immediately ; but I have seen them by dozens in the farthest anti-chamber, and some so obstreperous in their murmurings, that they have been made to take themselves away ; and, if after two or three years attendance they have their money, they must come down to the secretaries and other officers of the household ; after which, where are their profits ? Thus you see what mighty benefits accrue to the trades people in Saxony from count Bruhl's profusion. I could say a great deal more on count Bruhl's administration and measures, but you must give me leave to conclude ; an unusual drowsiness over-

comes

comes me this evening, as you will see by the irregularity of the five proceeding lines; so *bon repos*; from

SIR, &c.

F——t, August 6, 1760.

L E T T E R VII.

Sir,

TO-morrow I shall have a visitor. count B—— takes this district in his way to ——; I had no sooner notice of it, than I sent him a letter of invitation to spend a couple of days with me; though there never was any great intimacy between us, he has been so kind as to comply with my desire, and, is to be here to-morrow, which will be some short relief in my solitude; on this account it is that tho' this letter goes not away till after to-morrow, I write it to-day.

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The subject of it will be count Bruhl's æconomy, with regard to the revenues and finances of Saxony ; and here, methinks, I see my friend smile, as this, indeed, is the most droll part of the minister-regent's conduct ; and if so many creditable people, so many widows and orphans had not suffered by his financial measures, they would afford ample matter for laughter.

Such a squanderer at the head of a treasury ! Yet, this was count Bruhl's post before he came to be declared *premier ministre* ; really, that was one of the most diverting fights that could be ; it was just like making a liquorish boy keeper of a confectionary, or appointing the most abandoned prostitute an abbess to keep the nuns close to a life of austerity and devotion.

If we consider the nature of the several governments in the world, a humane heart must be tenderly concerned at
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the fate of whole nations, whose welfare is so wantonly sported with. The ambitious, by the most base, sinister, and criminal cabals, thrust themselves into important charges of the state ; charges on which depends the well-being of millions, and this without the least tincture of the requisite knowledge or talents.

Believe me, I have seen ministers of commerce unacquainted with the very first rudiments of trade ; I have known a president of mines, who did not know common lead ore ; ministers of finances, without any ideas of the end and constitution of the financial system ; also ministers for foreign affairs, who have betrayed the most absurd and ill-grounded conceptions of the interest, both of their own country, and the neighbouring states.

You must in my former letters have observed in what manner count Bruhl
came

came to be minister of the finances. Count Sulkowsky being desirous of the post of first lord of the bed-chamber, the best, indeed, he was capable of holding, as a papist. Count Bruhl was created minister of the finances, which, to the ease of the people, was a matter of as much indifference, as if two actors on the stage had changed dresses with each other. Whether count Bruhl was conversant with the nature of the finances, or whether he was qualified to promote the good of Saxony, in such a station, is not the point ; it was sufficient that this barter suited the accursed ambition of two men, who, to the misfortune of the people, have had the address to gain an ascendancy over two successive monarchs, father and son. But where should count Bruhl acquire any knowledge of the finances ? he was early entered at court, and soon mingled in all intrigues within his sphere ; that he had neither time nor inclination for study and literature ; and having never had

had a seat in the offices of the revenue, he can have learned nothing from experience, the best teacher, and little from uncertain information; that, unless he has received his knowledge by inspiration, it is impossible he should have any insight into that momentous employment.

Is it your opinion, also, that he is thus ignorant? If not, I can assure you, that I once brought him on this topic, by such an alluring overture as awakened all his attention, yet, not the least ray of financial knowledge did then appear in him.

Alas! Experience has too much shewn his contemptible incapacity to be at the head of a national revenue.

It would be greatly wronging this minister to say that he has adopted any fixed maxims in any one branch of affairs, except it be his avarice and
diffi-

dissipation. If his conduct in the management of the finances of Saxony be reduced to one single maxim, it was this, to spend on and support his own profusion, and that of the court, by running in debt whilst the steuer had any credit; and, afterwards, for the continuance of these dissipations, his *succedaneum* has been to saddle the subjects with an exorbitant load of imposts.

Of all the finances in Europe, I know of none that are in so terrible a confusion as these of Saxony; and here I do not so much speak of the debts, which must, indeed, be owned, to be a very lamentable case, but of its inward constitution and arrangement; the *schock* or contribution scheme is such a chaos, that the very oldest officers of the excise and steuer, grope in Egyptian darkness, without one glimpse of light to help them along; that,

that, to make sure, they take wherever any thing is to be found.

Not a finger has count Bruhl moved for remedying this terrible confusion; the sum and substance of all his orders to the steuer and the excise office, ever turn on this single point; that they must procure money.

It is an axiom practised by every peasant, that to enjoy the benefit of a thing, it must be preserved, and, of course, the disbursements for preserving it, are the most necessary, and to take place of all others; but, even of this common principle, count Bruhl seems ignorant; for, rather than make any retrenchment in the lavish expences of the court, or only in his own, all the future incomes of the Saxon dominions may run to irretrievable ruin.

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Of this, a singular instance now comes into my mind. About fifteen days ago, I paid a visit, in the electoral circle, to ———, where happened to be Mr. B——, * who, in table talk, said, that about a year before, the dykes being out of repair, it was apprehended the Elbe would make a breach, overflow some royal domains, and lands of private persons, to the damage of above four tons of gold; and, besides, the course of the river would be diverted some miles into the territory of——. He had made as exact a calculation, as possible, of the charges, of repairing the dykes, which, in the whole, came only to 1500 dollars, and transmitted it to the treasury of Dresden. All the commissioners agreed in the great necessity of the repair; yet, one of them, in a private letter, assured him, that

* “ This passage I have been obliged to
 “ mutilate lest some worthy persons might suffer
 “ by it.” The Editor.

the treasury could not furnish the sum; all monies, as fast as they came in, being delivered up to the court, without any excuse to the contrary. But a proposal being made to him by the whole board, that if he would advance the money, they jointly and seperately engaged that he should be satisfied; he, from a concern of the public good, came into it, and took the repair in hand. What a blessed condition must the finances be in, when the treasury of a king and elector is not able to furnish 1,500 dollars, to prevent a damage of several tons of gold, or cannot so much as venture to make so small a defalcation from the monies appropriated to the luxury of the court and minister; that, in all probability, the damage would actually have happend, had not the worthy person agreed to stay two years for his money, and immediately fenced the weakest parts.

Under such wild management it could not be otherwise, but, at the long-

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run,

run, the debts of all the offices in Saxony, must rise to such sums, as to pay neither capital nor interest, so that the steuer, which had the best credit, absolutely failed; for, in four or five years before the failure became manifest, such was the reputation of the steuer, that people were glad to lodge their money there, and exchanged it, at a considerable loss, for steuer specie, so called, because no other money was received there; but, unhappily, this was building on a sandy foundation.

This destructive issue, such a weak politician as I could foresee; and three or four years before, it was my happiness, by my dissuasions, to save two families from the general calamity; such a foresight required no great wisdom; for what else had Saxony to expect from the boundless profusion both of the court and the minister.

Indeed, under a rational administration, this failure of the steuer could never

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ver have happened ; for, since the commencement of count Bruhl's ministry, not a dyet has been held in Saxony, in which the quarterly and pfennig steuers besides many other imposts, have not been increased, besides fresh grants of the knights fees. In defence of this augmentation of taxes, it was always alledged, that the produce of this or that tax had fallen short of the estimate. Now as the country had liberally made up these deficiencies by this increase of the taxes, what satisfactory cause can be adduced for such an overwhelming debt ?

There are not wanting persons, and they very expert in public affairs, who are persuaded that the downfall of the steuer was a premeditated design of count Bruhl, for the further enriching of himself by fishing in troubled water, and buying up the steuer bills at a very low rate, as he knew how to get them paid at par ; but as, for the honour of our nature, I would not think the very worst of men,

where their actions will admit of another construction, so I take upon me to differ from these gentlemen.

So far I believe ; that count Bruhl never gave himself any thought or concern about these consequences to Saxony of his boundless expences, and those of the court. Was it ever known that a spendthrift troubled himself about the upshot of his extravagancies, and what would be come of him when all his resources were exhausted ? How much less will any one, who is inclined to profuseness lay to heart what may be the consequences of his dissipations to the country, or other people.

The steuer having failed, I will not deny but the minister might have taken advantage of that event ; there are many circumstances which favour such a surmise : We all know that he did not grieve himself to death at it ; and if it so much as gave him any concern he must have concealed

cealed it deep in his heart, for it never appeared in his looks ; in that gloomy juncture, not a cloud was seen to shade the gay serenity of his countenance.

Let us, however, see what measures count Bruhl took, when the failure of the steuer broke out ; several very solid projects were laid before him, by which the public credit might have been restored, and firmly established within a few years. But none were approved of : Some very probably debarred the court, and of course count Bruhl, from fingering the produce of several branches of the revenue.

On the contrary, an airy scheme of a *Tontine* with annuities was embraced with applause, as its tendency was to promote new debts, without any absolute necessity of liquidating the former. Mountains of gold were promised to the subscribers to this *Tontine*, the interests were not only to increase to the survivor,

but the benefits extended to their heirs,
even to the tenth generation,

Count Bruhl and the schemer must have thought the world very simple, if they expected to catch birds with such gilded lime twigs: the whole project was no more nor less, than if a broken tradesman, before making up matters with his creditors, should promise 50 *per cent.* interest, to all, who for the sake of his fair looks, should advance him money to clear with his creditors; but as scarce any one person would be thus grossly taken in, so the *Tontine*-scheme vanish'd likewise into its primordial nihility.

This produced the necessity of a more solid scheme, and in what could this be intitled to preference, but as it spared the poor subjects, whose lamentable fate it generally is, not only to be rendered miserable by the wanton passions and errors in government of their
rulers

rulers, but likewise the misfortunes resulting to the state by such misconduct, must be repaired out of their substance.

A dyet is summoned and a scheme laid before it, for a capitation and land-tax, to be continued for nine years; and which, according to computation, were to bring in a million annually. Tho' it was seconded only by about 20 court-sycophants and pensioners who did not make one 20th part of the assembly, all others vigorously opposing it, as the country could not bear any additional taxes; the count, grand vizier like, in defiance of the fundamental constitution of the electorate, and all the honours and privileges of the states, introduced both the above taxes; and, on the expiration of the nine years, by a like act of despotism, they were continued.

The calculation of a million to be produced annually by this capitation

and land-tax, was short instead of exceeding; the produce of them amounting at least to a million and a half every year. In Saxony there cannot be less than a million and a half of people; and Wirtemburgh I reckon at half a million, it being certainly one half smaller than Saxony, and far less populous; no person in whatever station was exempt from the capitation, not so much as servants or beggars; and the very smallest yearly payment, was from a guilder down to 12 groschen, and the middle class of people paid no less than two, three, or four rix-dollars; to this must be added the land-tax; and little must he know of the country, who will affirm that the two taxes yielded less than a million and a half *per annum*; so that at the most moderate computation, within the space of 10 years, here is no less than fifteen millions.

Since the year 1746, that regent minister had made several reductions in
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the army. All the world know that in the year 1756, the standing forces of Saxony consisted only of 15000 men; whereas formerly in time of a profound peace, it maintained 25000 men; which in critical times, it increased to 30000; and in war time it has brought 40000 into the field; thus, between the year 1746 and 1756, there was a saving at least of 10000 men; which at the very lowest computation, is as many millions as years.

Farther in the year 1747, Saxony, in order to discharge the debts of the steuer, borrowed of the electorate of Hanover six millions of rix-dollars, mortgaging for this sum, the Saxon part of the county of Mansfeld, and all the bailiwicks, in Thuringen, with all their incomes, the sovereignty alone excepted.

Farther, in the last war the city of Leipzig paid for the whole country near 2 mill. to the king of Prussia, by way of contribution,

bution, and had bonds from the several districts; these contributions, with the interests and other charges, to the amount of about two millions, the regent minister levied on the country; but not a dollar has the city of Leipzig recovered; under pretence that this money must be indispensibly applied towards the discharge of the steuer debts.

Now if you please, we will make a brief recapitulation:

Produce of the capita-		
tion and tax — —	15	millions
Saved by reductions of		
the army — —	10	
Borrowed of the electo-		
rate of Hanover —	6	
Contributions levied —	2	
	<hr/>	
Total,	33	millions
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Thus

Thus count Bruhl during his administration, exclusive of the ordinary revenues of Saxony, has levied thirty-three millions of dollars, only for paying off the steuer debts; yet it is known to the whole world, that within these 10 years no creditor, whether foreign or native, have received a single heller of his capital, nor scarce one tenth part of the interest, except the subjects of Prussia, and what these have received, does not make a million; I would fain know what is become of the other thirty-two millions.

But behold another mystery; during the reign of the late king Frederick Augustus and the ministry of the present prince of Sulkowsky, the debts of Saxony might be about twenty millions, I am well assured not more; whereas such has been the œconomy of count Bruhl, that the court steuer and treasury debts are swell'd to above a hundred millions. The revenue of Saxony in the reign of the
above

above mentioned prince was, *communibus annis*, little more or less than six millions of dollars: With this a very splendid court was maintained, both ministers and mistresses filled their pockets; yet, were the several interests of the thirty millions of debts punctually paid; whereas count Bruhl, by his incessant augmentation of taxes, has screwed up the ordinary revenue of Saxony to eight millions, exclusive of the produce of the capitation and land-tax; yet, for the last 10 years, since the bankruptcy of the steuer, not the tenth part of the interest has been paid,

Thus, in whatever light count Bruhl be viewed, he is really a prodigy; should a private person possessed of a hundred and fifty thousand dollars in lands, run in debt a hundred thousand dollars, and afterwards stop payment of interest, then borrow thirty-two thousand dollars under pretence of discharging his debts and apply only one thou-

thousand to that use; ought not he to be declared incapable of managing his fortune, and his estate to be sequestered for the benefit of his creditors, with a scanty allowance to himself.

But here such a one sits at the helm of the state; and it is not with his own substance that he commits such extravagancies, but with the substance of the whole country, with the blood and sweat of the distressed subjects; by his mismanagement, families who have liv'd in reputation, the widows of creditable husbands, and orphans, after being well brought up, see themselves reduced to the utmost necessity; and as for those born to labour and poverty, the rigour of his taxes deprives them of the small fruits of their industry, and all this openly; think what indignation the turpitude and inhumanity of such a conduct, raises in the generous part of mankind; but that's what he little minds.

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For my part, I cannot think on such a Leviathan; the account I have given you of him causes such an emotion in me, that I must give over, and so remain

Sir, &c.

F——t, *August* 8, 1760.

L E T T E R VIII.

SIR,

TO be sure, the bombardment with which general Laudohn has visited Breslau, is by this time known in your parts. I have it from good hands, that above eighty houses, and among these, several palaces, are reduced to ashes. This bombardment was begun without any formal attack, or so much as opening the trenches; consequently he could not, rationally, have any hopes of making himself master of
Breslau;

Breslau; that this destruction was purely for the sake of destroying it, as a revenge for Dresden; but, how does this revenge disgrace the perpetrator! At Dresden, a formal attack was carried on, nothing was done contrary to the received rules and practices of war; and, as for its deplorable fate, the fault must chiefly lye on the Austrian governor. But, the bombardment of Breslau, is without any of these circumstances; on which side soever it be viewed, it betrays a furious thirst of revenge, the criterion of a fordid mind.

Would you believe ——— Oh forgive me! I recollect your strict command, to forbear my observations on either civil or military occurrences, till I had closed my narrative of count Bruhl; and, as I promised a punctual compliance with your mandate, I'll cross the whole foregoing paragraph.

But,

But, does my friend know, that it is in my power to frustrate your command, without your charging me with non-compliance? I can wonderfully shorten my narration, and can confidently write, as I now do, *in optima forma juris*, that I know nothing more; and that, in this letter, I take my leave of count Bruhl, supposing withal, that I had still the most secret and diverting particulars in reserve for your entertainment; therefore, I hope you will grant me a small dispensation, and allow me, by way of variety, to intermix my observations on public affairs, least, in the mean time, they may grow stale; or, according to Sancho Pancho's phrase, *turn rotten upon my hands*.

What I shall now entertain you with, is the conduct of his excellency count Bruhl, in state affairs; and I hope to convince you, that the minister has in nothing made a worse figure, than in these; you will every-where meet with

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an astonishing want of all policy ; you will see him always groping about fearful, and wavering, and his eyes closed, as the facetious Swift represents John, in the Tale of a Tub. With exceptions, however, of any case where his own interest is concerned, for here, and here only, count Bruhl has never been wanting, either in prudence or steadfastness.

The war which followed the election of his Polish majesty, and the affairs of those times, I pass over in silence, as it might be objected, that they should be placed to count Sulkowsky's account, as the pilot of state affairs in those times ; and, it is, indeed, my opinion, that the latter had by far the greatest share in those transactions. The first important occurrence in the general concerns of Europe, under count Bruhl, was the conduct of the court of Saxony, at the demise of the emperor Charles VI. and the succeeding war for the Austrian succession.

sion. Now let us see how our count began his ministry.

Of all the claimants to the Austrian succession, Saxony had the best right. That which the house of Bavaria deduced from the will of Ferdinand I. and the emperor Charles VI. as married to a daughter of the emperor Joseph, should have been postponed to the king of Poland, whose consort was Joseph's eldest daughter. As for Spain, I believe nobody before dreamed, that the Spanish line, of the House of Bourbon, could have any pretension to the Austrian succession; and the argument adduced by Spain, made more for France, whose king is not only a descendant of those very princesses of Spain, from whom Philip V. derives his right, but is, besides, the eldest line.

But the Saxon claim is enforced by several considerations. It has been a constant law in the Austrian family,
that

that if two archdukes, brothers, die, without male issue, the daughters of the elder brother, exclude those of the younger, even though he were the posterior sovereign; and this rule of succession Ferdinand II. expressly confirmed: Further the emperor Charles VI. entered into a solemn convention with his brother Joseph, that the female issue of Joseph should succeed preferably to his: Thus the emperor Charles VI. had no right to make any pragmatic sanction in favour of his daughter.

There were few people, I believe, of any knowledge in the affairs of Europe, who did not foresee, with all the certainty which future events will allow of, that immediately on the demise of the emperor Charles VI. France, which for two centuries past, has been the rancorous enemy of the house of Austria and I might say of the whole Germanic body, would not let slip this opportunity of the extinction

tion of the Austrian male-line, for curtailing the power of that house; consequently it was with no less certainty foreseen, that the pragmatic sanction would be of no force but what it should derive from the chance of war.

These things being so easily foreseen, and the house of Saxony having a solid claim to the Austrian succession, what were count Bruhl's measures? Six months after the death of the emperor Charles VI. when the drift of France to dismember the power of Austria, no longer admitted of any doubt, he renew'd his engagements with Russia relative to the pragmatic sanction, and gave this court the strongest assurances of adhering to it, which was such a solecism in politicks, as could not be thought to come from a minister of state.

Whether he had purposed or not that the Saxon court should put in its claim
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the Austrian succession, yet was this step unpardonable in a minister : Was it intended to assert the claim, he then should not have renewed the engagements ; if no claim was intended, he should not have taken on himself the guaranty of a succession against which such a formidable storm was gathering. Is it said that count Bruhl, as it is not unusual with statesmen, meant nothing by all those assurances ? Then it is difficult to see of what benefit the renewal of those engagements could be to the court of Saxony : Statesmen who make a jest of promises and engagements at random, without the view of any advantage, judging them even by the rules of corrupt policy, are shallow superficial creatures, as deficient in true wisdom and skill, as in probity.

What was count Bruhl's next step ? he claimed the vote of Bohemia for the electoral prince of Saxony ; if the motive to this claim was not some private interest

interest of the count's, as this he would have a vote more to sell to France, it appears to be a second trespass against sound politics.

Such a claim could not be made without giving the court of Vienna to perceive that some designs against it were in agitation, and that the claimants to the Austrian inheritance would be increased in favour of its enemies: But as the claim of the vote for Bohemia was only by reason of the incapacity of the female descendant, the queen of Bohemia and Hungary, this was virtually to acknowledge the queen, in other respects, the legal heiress of Charles VI. and this proceeding, by the by, was so contradictory to the intended claim, thereby sufficiently intimated; that the whole of this ill devised pretension could be productive of no manner of advantage to Saxony. Had count Bruhl formed any fixed plan of conduct in either case, he would have proceeded otherwise, but
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His excellency seems to have been in a total irresolution what he should do; and it is manifest from some particular circumstances, that this fluctuation continued till within a few weeks before the Saxon Troops marched into Bohemia; such vacillations, in my opinion, always betray a great want of genius: If circumstances are often so equivocal that nothing can with prudence be resolved on; yet the wise man has always previously deliberated, how he will act in all contingencies, and he orders his measures so, that whatever party he takes, whatever be the turn of affairs, he will still be secure, as far as the uncertainty of sublunary things allow; but here is not the least shadow of any such deliberation.

When count Bruhl had brought himself to act against Austria, any wise minister, in his place, would have judged it necessary, to have immediately entered into the closest engagements with
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the king of Prussia, for he could not reasonably expect that France would have the interest of Saxony much at heart ; this court having so recently incur'd its resentment in the election of the king of Poland ; with Bavaria it also stood on indifferent terms, that elector peremptorily claiming the whole Austrian succession.

Though an alliance with France and Bavaria was what he could not avoid, yet according to all the rules of policy, the capital point was the clearest and most close and confidential engagement with Prussia ; of all the Austrian dominions it laid claim only to Silesia ; at that time no cordial harmony existed between Prussia and Saxony, yet had Prussia no manner of interest to favour Bavaria more than Saxony.

But count Bruhl had no thoughts of entering into such a conjunction with Prussia, though by that only, he could
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promise himself some advantage, if the war proved successful; yet, for a quarter of a year, after the Saxon troops had marched into Bohemia, it was not known what might be expected from Prussia, whether it was friend or foe. See here a flagrant instance of this.

On the taking of Prague, in the close of November 1741, lieutenant general Birkholtz, with a body of Saxons, and lieutenant general Pallastron, with another of French and Bavarians were sent to drive out of Bohemia the Austrian army, which lay encamped at Teutschbrod: whilst the Saxon camps on the one side, and the French on the other, were in motion: To this end, a body of 8000 Prussians, under lieutenant general Kalckstein, since field marshal, came and encamped on one side of the Saxons towards Chrudin.

The Saxon general immediately sent advice of this unexpected arrival of the
K
Prussian

Prussian corps, which threw the court into great perplexity, how to act; with regard to this, it was recommended to the chevalier de Saxe, and he ordered general Birkholtz to sound the Prussian general concerning his intent in taking post so near the Saxons.

Accordingly a quarter master, a man of address, was sent with Fouriers to Chrudin, as it were to prepare quarters; and, at the same time, it was to be signified to the Prussian general, that the operations of the Saxon army, made it necessary to take possession of Chrudin; in my opinion, this method of sounding, was going a wrong way to work, and if it be count Bruhl's invention, it does him little honour; whatever might be the dispositions of Prussia this was a very ridiculous inuendo; for if the Saxons said that the operations of their army required them to take possession of Chrudin, the Prussians might answer, that their operations

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required them to keep possession of that place ; what absurdity to expect that an enemy, on such a compliment, should immediately quit Chrudin, and, with a friend, it was dealing very discourteously.

But so it is, Sir, your narrow sighted minds make policy to consist only in evasions and fetches ; they never keep the strait road, and though their scope lies directly before their eyes, they will take by-ways. Where was the necessity of this low contemptible fetch ? Why not signify to general Kalkstein, that Prussia being likewise at war with Austria, it was hoped that this general had no orders to obstruct the allies, and that nothing was to be apprehended from this approach of the Prussians.

General Kalkstein, for his part, also paid little regard to this subterfuge ; he was a gentleman of great plainness and honour ; and, agreeable to this charac-

ter, answered, that he saw the drift of this compliment; and sent word to the Saxon generals that he would not in the least impede their operations, but that the manner and import of the compliments was what he could not but be a little surprized at, and he was very sorry that the Saxon generals should have no better thoughts of him, than that he would evacuate Chrudin on such a Commission; adding, that it was what he would not do.

This incident happened in December 1741, and but too clearly shows that there was then no good understanding between the courts of Prussia and Saxony, as count Bruhl had little to expect for the advantage of his court from France and Bavaria, of which they had given him open evidences in the federal treaty for the future partitions of the Austrian territories; (in which they are very liberal of what was not their own,) Bohemia, the only country lying the
most

most convenient for Saxony, and which only could have been any real addition to its strength, was assigned to Bavaria, he precipitately embarked on the tempestuous sea of war, in a crazy iron-sick vessel. The way to have procured some advantage to Saxony, was immediately on the death of the emperor Charles VI. to have joined with Prussia or France, and have steered a quite different course, whereas now, whatever success had attended the arms of the confederates, Saxony could promise itself nothing.

In the beginning of the year 1742, the court of Saxony entered into such a close coalition with that of Prussia, that it even put its army under the command of his Prussian majesty, but before a month was at an end count Bruhl's ideas were altered; the Austrians in 1742 having penetrated into Bavaria, and reduced it, the Saxon minister's heart failed him, and his fraudulent genius which imagines all state policy to con-

first in duplicity, put him upon being beforehand with the other allies, in a clandestine negotiation with the court of Vienna.

These clandestine negotiations were conducted by her Polish majesty, but certainly not without the privity and co-operation of count Bruhl; you remember the mysterious interviews between father Guarini, mentioned in one of my former letters; but, what is more, this clandestine negotiation of the queen with the court of Vienna was set on foot with very little forecast; the dispatches passing through the hands of the post-master-general of the Saxon army, one Jacobi, and consequently, through the whole army; and hence arose a small incident, which, to avoid digressions, I shall reserve for another time.

These secret negotiations of the Saxon court his Prussian majesty got knowlege of;

of; besides, nothing could be more ambiguous than cardinal Fleury's conduct in this war; and his disposition to circumvent his allies, had appeared towards Spain and Sardinia some years before, in the war occasioned by the election of his Polish majesty; thus, how is the king of Prussia to be blamed, if after the victory of Zaslau, he preferred a safe and honourable peace to such fickle and perfidious allies.

Notwithstanding this behaviour of the Saxon court, notwithstanding count Bruhl, so early as 1742, had withdrawn the Saxon troops from the Prussian army to the borders of Saxony, by which they lost all share in the victory at Zaslau, yet, at the peace, his Prussian majesty was not unmindful of Saxony. It is now known, that by a private article in the preliminaries of Breslau, Saxony was to have some adjacent circles of Bohemia; how this article came to be vacated at the peace of Berlin, is best

known to his excellency ; as I write nothing to you but what I am certain of, I will not determine whether this was owing to an error of judgment, or of corrupt will.

The court of Vienna having, after the peace of Berlin, insulted the head of the empire in a very extraordinary manner, and giving sufficient evidence of its design to recover Silesia, the king of Prussia, by virtue of the union of Francfort, was obliged to march his army into Bohemia, in defence of the oppressed head of the empire, and in support of the unanimous choice of the electors, which the court of Vienna had the confidence openly to declare illegal, and of no force. Now count Bruhl, inveigled into the alliance of Warsaw, was pleased to side with Austria ; and I must own that at first, I saw nothing to object against this proceeding.

From

From my considerations on human nature, I am much inclined to judge tenderly of men, and extenuate, if not quite over-look their failings; and if I can discover any one commendable motive for their procedures, I persuade myself that was uppermost in their minds; accordingly, the successful progresses of the Austrian arms, from the year 1742 to 1744, and the strength of the alliance by the accession of Great-Britain, Holland, and Austria appeared to me very cogent motives.

I even thought I saw in this alliance a most admirable stroke of policy. The second war between Prussia and Austria rendered it probable, that a permanent enmity would take root in both houses, and occasion many future wars, when the alliance of Saxony would be of the utmost importance to both the belligerent powers, it being, as it were, the only door through which either house could penetrate into the heart of the

other's dominions. I supposed count Bruhl had made Austria pay dear for the alliance, and not suffered himself to be sed with delusory assurances of future acquisitions, but had secured to himself two of the circles of Bohemia, as did the king of Sardinia in the Milanese.

Nay, what is still more, count Bruhl seemed to me to tread in the steps of the House of Savoy, to act up to its distinguished policy; sometimes assisting Prussia, then Austria, but ever making the price of Saxony's alliance some substantial advantage in hand, and not prostituting it for fallacious expectations; and concluding that this prudence would raise Saxony to a prosperity and reputation not inferior to that which the before-mentioned House has acquired, so as to be now enrolled among the monarchs of Europe.

But

But most terribly have I been deceived in these fine suppositions. Consequences have shewn that not one of these motives was in count Bruhl's head at the time of the treaty of Warsaw ; he was, by the most romantic promises, by a treaty for dividing the lyon's skin before he was taken, drawn in to plunge Saxony into a new war ; which, in charges and contributions to Prussia, has at least cost this harraffed country twenty millions.

With the least attention to the real interest of Saxony in that airy treaty for the partition of future conquests, would he not, in the convention of Warsaw, have at least stipulated for the circles of Bohemia on this side the Eger, as contiguous to Saxony, agreeable to the secret article of the Breslau preliminaries, in case of no conquests being made on Prussia ? And if such a case did not occur to him, what must be thought of his prudence ? Had not Sardinia set him a fair example of such policy in the treaty of Worms.

He

He had no reason to doubt of Austria's coming into those conditions. The assistance of Saxony was then of such absolute necessity to that house, that otherwise the only alternative was either to see all Bohemia and Moravia wrested from it, or to yield up the imperial dignity to France and Bavaria. Had Austria objected to these conditions, Great Britain, as its ally by the treaty of Worms, would have procured her assent, as seeing that, without the assistance of Saxony, Austria, to which that crown had already sacrificed so much, would be totally ruined.

Under the guarantee of the maritime powers, Saxony might also be sure that Austria must fulfil the articles, as it had been obliged with Sardinia. Certainly the Austrian ministers must have laughed in their sleeves, that, in the greatest plunge in which Austria ever found itself, they had met with such very tractable ministers, as to furnish them with
twenty-

twenty-four thousand auxiliaries, on the most visionary expectations ; nay, who suffered laws to be prescribed to him concerning the very scanty pittance allotted to Saxony out of future conquests ; and this at a juncture, when Austria, instead of meditating conquests, was fighting *pro aris & focis*, and might think itself very happy in repelling an enemy bent on its destruction.

But what am I saying? Count Bruhl was not at all blind, at least to his own interest. I could specify to you the sums with which Great Britain allured him into the treaty of Worms : and you may possibly remember to have read at that time, in the public papers, of the queen of Hungary's presenting the countess of Bruhl with a considerable lordship in Bohemia.

Here you have the true and proper motives by which the Saxon minister was induced to conclude the treaty of
 Warsaw ;

Warſaw ; and the welfare and advantage of Saxony was no farther conſidered than, in caſe Heaven ſhould be ſo very lavish of its favours, as to proſper their preſumptuous treaty of partition. Thus is the welfare of nations ſported with. Eternal Providence ! how happy ſhall I be when the neceſſity of ſuch miniſters to the connection of affairs ſhall be laid open to me.

Poſſibly Saxony might have ſuffered leſs, had count Bruhl, in the progreſs of the war, purſued thoſe meaſures which common ſenſe ſeemed to point out. Saxony was for being conſidered only as an auxiliary ; and the principles of the law of nations, in the opinions of civilians, diſagreeing in this point, as Pruſſia, under the like title, marched its army in ſupport of the emperor Charles VII. yet Saxony, as no more than an auxiliary, was ſecure againſt any attack from Pruſſia ; and I think it was plainly the electorate's concern, carefully to
have

have wrapped itself up in that cloak, till by a series of decisive successes against Prussia, it might be thrown aside with safety.

But very different was the fate of the war ; the loss of three signal battles, of which the damages were too great to be concealed, must have taught count Bruhl that the whole project of dividing the lion's skin had been founded on disappointed presumption : should he not then have endeavoured to prevent the increase of the misfortunes of Saxony, and carefully have kept to the title of auxiliary ?

On the contrary, this rash and unfortunate project was formed to attack the king of Prussia in the heart of his dominions, by an irruption from Saxony, and of course the mantle of auxiliary was to be absolutely thrown aside, and general Grunn's corps was accordingly ordered into Saxony. This
project

project I call rash and unfortunate, as there was not the least probability of its success. The territories of Prussia bordering upon Saxony were not uncovered; besides that Prussian army which had three times successively made the Austrians and Saxons turn their backs, there was another corps of observation, sufficient for the defence of the Prussian territories. The consequence of such inconsiderate measures could not be other than what it proved, extreme distress and disgrace to Saxony; of which, if count Bruhl had any feeling, it would have produced an alteration of measures, which has never been seen.

Thus wise and glorious have been the specimens which his excellency has given us of his politics, relatively to the affairs of Saxony, that it is your opinion he will hardly be delivered down to posterity as a pattern of ministerial abilities. Of this too, perhaps, I could write a great deal to you; but be pleased

ed to remember what I said above, *in optima juris forma*, namely, That in this letter I would take my leave of count Bruhl; and really, for one letter, the present is long enough in conscience; so that all I have further to say is, that I shall ever be, with the most perfect esteem,

SIR,

*Your affectionate friend,
and humble servant.*

F——t, August 12, 1760.

POSTSCRIPT.

This moment your favour of the 9th comes to hand; so you set up for a champion of count Bruhl's; really that's pleasant enough: yet through all your affected gravity I perceive, now-and-then, a simpering which lets me into your drift. By your objections to my narrative,

narrative, you would set me in a flame against this author of Saxony's misfortunes ; I see plainly you are for irritating me, that I may lay him open on all sides, and paint him in his natural colours.

Well then, couch your lance to assert the honour of your giant or magician, for which he is I really know not, and be assured that I shall not be sparing of my strokes in the rescue of the beautiful princess *Saxonia*, whom this monstrous giant *Grisamber* keeps as a captive in heavy chains, or possibly has totally fascinated her. Methinks, I already see you tumbled from the saddle, and sprawling in the sand ; for, let me tell you, my weapons are infallible, and cannot be broken ; they were put into my hands by two goddesses, whose history I'll relate to you, whenever you own yourself overcome.

But

But one objection you introduce with such a solemn seriousness, as provokes me; so that I should not have any rest, did I not refute it instantly, without waiting till the next post.

You say that all these stupendous sums which I mentioned, which were necessary to support such profuseness, the king of Poland, from his royal munificence, may have given to count Bruhl; and that, both with relation to the donor, and the donee, such donations are not unprecedented: But very thin sown are these instances, and never heard of in any courts, where the strict rules of equity had their due weight.

But do you know, my dear friend; for such I yet esteem you, though you are for breaking a lance with me, that your objection will not hold water? First, it is utterly impossible, at least there is not a shadow of any similitude, that his Polish majesty, with all his royal
muni-

munificence, should ever have given count Bruhl one fourth part of these monies. How should his Polish majesty, at a time when he was continually burthening his subjects with new impost, when his treasury became insolvent, when, for the support of its credit, he was obliged to have recourse to the most extraordinary means, seizing on monies advanced on the faith and credit of the court of judicature, when he saw himself obliged to mortgage part of his dominions to Hanover, and all not sufficient to save the bankruptcy of the Steuer, by which multitudes of wealthy persons creditable widows, and well educated orphans, whose fortunes had been lodged in that fund, were reduced to the utmost misery, is it, I say, supposable that in such times his Polish majesty should have given away millions to a minister, who had not performed one service of any *eclat*, under whose ministry not a victory had been gained, not a foot of land acquired? There can be no such thing;

thing; and he who thinks thus of his Polish majesty, that prince is little obliged to him.

But let us for once allow that count Bruhl's sovereign did actually give him those many millions, which his dissipations and purchases required, how flagitiously must he have imposed on that prince, to draw such grants from him! To me there appears not less guilt and infamy in such seductive misrepresentation of things, than if, unknown to his majesty, he had drawn those sums from the several treasuries of Saxony, and loaded the subjects with new-invented taxes, for making up the deficiencies occasioned by his surreptitious embezzlements.

It is the end of civil government, consequently the duty of every ruler, to promote the welfare of his subjects by all possible means; and every minister is, by the most sacred obligations, also bound

bound to this duty ; taking an oath to give the sovereign true and faithful advice, and support and assist him in the discharge of that duty. Now if he entices the sovereign to donations manifestly contrary to the welfare of his subjects, what becomes of his own duty, and the character of honesty ? But is it reconcileable with that character, by immense dissipations, and equal accumulations, to absorb the substance of the subjects, and this at a time when the public credit was ruined, great numbers of persons reduced to poverty, the starving subjects groaning under the load of taxes, and large territories mortgaged to foreign States ? May I never live to see such enormities accounted consistent with the character of an honest man, and the duty of a minister.

Were all the subjects of Saxony in the most happy condition, were the taxes very easy, yet would not the tenth part of such donations comport with the duty

ty either of sovereign or minister; for, with so many millions, what great things might have been performed for the advancement of commerce and manufactures, the increase of the people the improvement of the land, and especially, for the strength and defence of the state!

You may, possibly no longer remember the words of one of the best of Romans in Plutarch's life of Sylla. It is well known by what oppressive and sanguinary ways he had enriched himself, and was then at the head of the State; yet was not that magnanimous patriot afraid to say to him, *Thou an honest man! How can that be, when thy father left thee nothing, and thou art so rich?*

So much for your very grave first objection, and I believe you have enough for this time. *Adieu.*

The E N D.

